

*The Militia Immaculata
gives thanks and praise to
Almighty God for the
Pontificate of Pope Benedict XVI.*



MI Monthly Intention

*Immaculata,
please intercede...*

... that faith in the Resurrection of Christ may lead us ever more closely toward the gifts that are eternal.

Dear MI Members and Friends,

How blessed we have been to live through the pontificate of Pope Benedict XVI. We have, also, experienced the historical moment of his resignation and the awaited conclave of the College of Cardinals for the election. My experience has been simultaneously lived with caring for my 85 year old mother, the same age as the Pope Emeritus. She contracted an upper respiratory infection which threw her for a loop leading to urgent care and doctor visits along with an emergency room visit to the early hour of this morning. It made me reflect on Pope Benedict and his failing physical health, a major reason for his resignation, *“After repeatedly examined my conscience before God and have come to the certainty that my strength, advanced age, are no longer appropriate to exercise properly the Petrine ministry.”* Pope Benedict with prayer accepted the increasing physical and

mental limitations which come with the aging process and with the purest of humility resigned his authority as the Supreme Pontiff. What a beautiful act. As written on one of the posters held by the faithful at Castelgondolfo, *“Your act of humility has only increased our love for you.”*

May we all learn humility and an increased love for the Church from the greatness of this man, who said from the balcony of Castelgondolfo, *“I am simply a pilgrim beginning the last leg of his pilgrimage on this Earth.”*

I encourage you to read and reflect deeply on his teaching in his last general audience. There is the answer to who and what the Church is and who and what is the Office of Peter. *“The Church is not mine, not ours, but it is His.”*

Ann O'Donnell
Fr. Kolbe Missionary of the
Immaculata
fkmissionaries@gmail.com



Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, we love you and accompany you as fellow pilgrims in the heart of the Mother of the Church.

MI NATIONAL CENTER
MARYTOWN
1600 W PARK AVE
LIBERTYVILLE, IL
60048

WEB:
WWW.CONSECRATION.COM

MI NATIONAL PRESIDENT
FR. PATRICK
GREENOUGH, OFM CONV



Benedict XVI Last General Audience

Feb 27, 2013

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Thank you for coming in such large numbers to this last General Audience of my pontificate.

A heartfelt thanks! I am truly moved! And I see the Church alive! And I think we should also thank the Creator for the beautiful weather that He is giving us today while we're still in winter.

As the Apostle Paul in the biblical text that we have heard, I too feel in my heart that I must above all thank God, who guides and builds up the Church, who sows his Word and thus nourishes the faith in his People. At this moment my heart expands to embrace the whole Church throughout the world, and I thank God for the "news" that in these years in the Petrine ministry I have been able to receive about the faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love that circulates in the Body of the Church and makes it live in love, and about the hope that opens us and directs us towards the fullness of life, towards the heavenly homeland.

I feel that I carry everyone in prayer, in a present that is God's, where I recall every meeting, every trip, every pastoral visit. I gather everyone in prayer to entrust them to the Lord, so that we may have full knowledge of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, and so that we may comport ourselves in a manner worthy of Him, of His love, bearing fruit in every good work (cf. Col1:9-10).

At this time, I feel great trust, because I know, all of us know, that the Word of the truth of the Gospel is the strength of the Church, it is its life. The Gospel purifies and renews, it bears fruit, wherever the community of believers listens and receives the grace of God in truth and lives in charity. This is my trust, this is my joy.

When, on April 19 almost eight years ago, I agreed to take on the Petrine ministry, I felt this certainty firmly, and it has always accompanied me. At that moment, as I have already stated several times, the words that resounded in my heart were: Lord, why are you asking this of me and what are you asking of me? It is a great weight you are placing on my shoulders, but if this is what You ask, at your word I will let down the nets, confident that You will guide me, even with my weaknesses. And eight years later I can say that the Lord has truly guided me, He has been close to me, I could feel His presence every day. It has been a stretch of the Church's journey, which has had moments of joy and light, but also difficult moments; I felt like St. Peter and the Apostles in the boat on the Sea of Galilee: the Lord has given us many days of sunshine and gentle breeze, days when the fishing has been plentiful, and there were also times when the water was rough and the wind against us, as in the whole history of the Church, and the Lord seemed to sleep. But I always knew that the Lord is in the boat, and I always knew that the boat of the Church is not mine, not ours, but it is His. And He will not let her sink, it is He who leads it, certainly also through the men he has chosen, because so He has willed it. This was and is a certainty that nothing



The Vatican website can be located here: 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.

can obscure. And that is why today my heart is filled with gratitude to God because He has never left me or the Church without His consolation, His light, His love.

We are in the Year of Faith, which I wanted to strengthen our faith in God in a context that seems to put it more and more into the background. I would like to invite everyone to renew their firm trust in the Lord, to trust like children in the arms of God, certain that those arms support us always and are what allow us to walk every day, even when fatigued. I would like everyone to feel loved by that God who gave his Son for us and has shown us his boundless love. I want everyone to feel the joy of being Christian. A beautiful prayer to be recited daily in the morning says: "I adore you, my God, I love you with all my heart. Thank you for having created me, for having made me Christian..." Yes, we are happy for the gift of faith; it is the most precious thing that no one can take from us! We thank God for this every day, with prayer and with a coherent Christian life. God loves us, but expects that we too love Him!

But it is not only God that I want to thank at this time. A Pope is not alone in guiding the barque of Peter, even if the primary responsibility is his; and I have never felt alone in carrying the joy and weight of the Petrine ministry; the Lord has put next to me many people, with generosity and love for God and the Church, they have helped me and have been close to me. First of all you, dear Brother Cardinals: your wisdom, your advice, your friendship has been precious to me; my collaborators, starting with my Secretary of State who has accompanied me faithfully over the years, the Secretary of State and the whole of the Roman Curia, as well as all those who, in various fields, give their service to the Holy See: there are many faces who do not appear, they remain in the shadow, but precisely in this silence, in their daily work, in a spirit of faith and humility, they have been a solid and reliable support for me. A special thought to the Church of Rome, my diocese! I cannot forget the Brothers in the Episcopate and in the Priesthood, consecrated persons and the entire People of God: in the pastoral visits, in encounters, in the audiences, in my travels, I have always perceived great care and deep affection, but I also have loved each and every one, without exception, with that pastoral charity which is the heart of every pastor, especially the Bishop of Rome, the Successor of the Apostle Peter. Every day I have remembered each of you in my prayers, with a father's heart.

I would like my greetings and my thanks, then, to reach everyone: the heart of a Pope extends to the whole world. And I would like to express my gratitude to the Diplomatic Corps at the Holy See, which makes present the great family of nations. Here I also think of all those who work for a good communication and I thank them for their important service.

At this point I would like to thank from my heart all the many people around the world who in recent weeks have sent me touching tokens of attention, friendship and prayer. Yes, the Pope is never alone, now I experience this again in so great a way that it touches my heart. The Pope belongs to everyone and many people feel very close to him. It is true that I receive letters from the great ones of the world - from Heads of State, religious leaders, representatives of the world of culture and so on. But I also receive many letters from ordinary people who write to me simply from their heart and make me feel their affection, born from being together with Christ Jesus, in the Church. These people do not write to me the way one writes, for instance, to a prince or a to great person that one does not know. They write to me as brothers and

*Peter's experience, certainly singular, is also representative of the call of every apostle of the Gospel (Luke 5:1-11), who must never be discouraged in proclaiming Christ to all men, to the ends of the earth. But the text also brings us to reflect on the vocation to the priesthood and the consecrated. It is the work of God. **Man is not the author of his own vocation, but he replies to the divine proposal;** and human weakness must not trouble us if God calls. We must have confidence in his strength, which acts precisely in our poverty; we must more and more place our trust in the power of his mercy, which transforms and renews.*

*Pope Emeritus
Benedict XVI*

sisters, sons and daughters, with the sense of a very affectionate family tie. Here one can touch firsthand what the Church is - not an organization, not an association for religious or humanitarian purposes, but a living body, a community of brothers and sisters in the Body of Jesus Christ, who unites us all. To experience the Church in this way and to be able almost to touch with your hands the power of its truth and its love, is a source of joy, in a time when many speak of its decline. But we see how the Church is alive today!

In recent months, I felt that my strength had decreased, and I asked God earnestly in prayer to enlighten me with His light to make me take the right decision not for my sake, but for the good of the Church. I have taken this step in full awareness of its seriousness and also its novelty, but with profound peace of mind. Loving the Church also means having the courage to make tough choices, difficult ones, having always before oneself the good of the Church and not oneself.

Here allow me to return once again to April 19, 2005. The seriousness of the decision also lay precisely in the fact that from that moment on I was busy always and forever with the Lord. Always - whoever assumes the Petrine ministry no longer has any privacy. He belongs always and totally to everyone, to the whole Church. His life is, so to speak, totally deprived of its private dimension. I experienced, and I am experiencing it now, that one receives life when one gives it. I said before that many people who love the Lord also love the Successor of Saint Peter and are fond of him, that the Pope truly has brothers and sisters, sons and daughters all over the world, and that he feels safe in the embrace of their communion; because he no longer belongs to himself, he belongs to all and all belong to him.

The "always" is also a "forever" - there is no return to the private sphere. My decision to forgo the exercise of active ministry, does not revoke this. I will not return to private life, to a life of travel, meetings, receptions, conferences and so on. I am not abandoning the cross, but remain in a new way with the Crucified Lord. I no longer carry the power of the office for the government of the Church, but in the service of prayer I remain, so to speak, within St. Peter's bounds. St. Benedict, whose name I bear as Pope, will be for me a great example in this. He showed us the way to a life which, active or passive, belongs wholly to the work of God.

I thank each and everyone for the respect and understanding with which you have accepted this important decision. I will continue to accompany the journey of the Church through prayer and reflection, with the dedication to the Lord and to His Spouse, with which I have tried to live every day until now and with which I want to live forever. I ask you to remember me before God, and above all to pray for the Cardinals, who are called to so important a task, and for the new Successor of Peter: may the Lord accompany him with the light and the power of his Spirit.

Let us invoke the maternal intercession of Mary, Mother of God and of the Church, that she accompany each of us and the whole ecclesial community; we entrust ourselves to Her, with deep confidence.

Dear friends! God guides His Church, he sustains her always, and especially in difficult times. Let us never lose this vision of faith, which is the only true vision of the Church and the world. In our heart, in the heart of each of you, may there always be the joyous certainty that the Lord is near us, he does not abandon us, he is near us and surrounds us with his love. Thank you!

[Translation by Peter Waymel/ZENIT News Agency]

... it is necessary to assert vigorously the absolute and supreme dignity of every human life. The teaching that the Church ceaselessly proclaims does not change with the passing of time: human life is beautiful and should be lived to the full, even when it is weak and enveloped in the mystery of suffering.

*Pope Emeritus
Benedict XVI*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

During this Year of Faith, we have been called to renew our joyful trust in the Lord's presence in our lives and in the life of the Church. I am personally grateful for his unfailing love and guidance in the eight years since I accepted his call to serve as the Successor of Peter. I am also deeply grateful for the understanding, support and prayers of so many of you, not only here in Rome, but also throughout the world.

The decision I have made, after much prayer, is the fruit of a serene trust in God's will and a deep love of Christ's Church. I will continue to accompany the Church with my prayers, and I ask each of you to pray for me and for the new Pope. In union with Mary and all the saints, let us entrust ourselves in faith and hope to God, who continues to watch over our lives and to guide the journey of the Church and our world along the paths of history.

I commend all of you, with great affection, to his loving care, asking him to strengthen you in the hope which opens our hearts to the fullness of life that he alone can give. To you and your families, I impart my blessing.

Thank you!



Letters

Dear Pope Benedict XVI,

We are the children from the Militia of the Immaculata of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Modesto, CA. USA! We want to wish you good luck in everything you do with the rest of your life. We pray God always blesses you especially after you are not our Pope anymore. We really loved having you as our Pope and we will miss you a lot! We are sorry you cannot stay but we understand because we get tired too and sometimes we do not feel very good. We will pray for you with our families and in the MI meetings and offer to Mary, the Immaculata, all of our suffering and sacrifices. You know, St. Therese saved souls just by picking up paper and other sacrifices and St. Maximilian made the MI, had a newspaper, lots of friars and even gave his life! You probably know that, though. We hope we can do as good a job as St. Therese and St. Maximilian Kolbe

With all our love and all our prayers, Ari, Angela, Peter, Adrien, Naomi, John, Gemma, Jacob, Gabriel and Kateri.



Dear Pope Benedict XVI,

You have given us so much in the short time you have been our Papa. You said yes to God to watch over us and guide us in this world that is changing so fast, the same way Our Holy Mother did when He asked Her to be the mother of His Son. The burdens you bore have been heavy, but we knew we were safe in your loving arms. We will miss you very much, we know you are not abandoning us but instead as St. Maximilian's Knights At The Foot of the Cross you will continue to bear those same heavy burdens in prayer with great devotion. May God bless you and Our Holy Mother cradle you in Her arms as She cradled Her Son.

*With the love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary,
The Militia of the Immaculata Adult Prayer Village
St. Joseph's Catholic Church
Modesto, California*

Paschal Triduum With Pope Benedict XVI

Holy Thursday

His love is inexhaustible; it truly goes to the very end.

“You are clean, but not all of you,” the Lord says (Jn 13:10). This sentence reveals the great gift of purification that he offers to us, because he wants to be at table together with us, to become our food. “But not all of you” – the obscure mystery of rejection exists, which becomes apparent with Judas’ act, and precisely on Holy Thursday, the day on which Jesus made the gift of himself, it should give us food for thought. The Lord’s love knows no bounds, but man can put a limit on it.”



Good Friday

Let us allow his sacrifice on the cross to question us. Let us permit him to put our human certainties in crisis. Let us open our hearts to him. Jesus is the truth that makes us free to love. Let us not be afraid: upon dying, the Lord saved sinners, that is, all of us. The apostle Peter wrote: Jesus “himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed” (1Pt 2:24). This is the truth of Good Friday: on the cross, the Redeemer has restored to us the dignity that belongs to us, has made us adoptive sons and daughters of God whom he has created in his image and likeness.

Let us remain, then in adoration before the cross. O Christ, crucified King, give us true knowledge of you, the joy for which we yearn, the love that fills our heart, thirsty for the infinite. This is our prayer Jesus Son of God, who died for us on the cross and was raised up on the third day.

Easter Sunday

The great explosion of the resurrection has seized us in baptism so as to draw us on. Thus we are associated with a new dimension of life into which, amid the tribulations of our day, we are already in some way introduced. To live one’s own life as a continual entry into this open space: this is the meaning of being baptized, of being Christian. This is the joy of the Easter Vigil.

The resurrection is not a thing of the past; the resurrection has reached us and seized us. We grasp hold of it, we grasp hold of the risen Lord, and we know that he holds us firmly even when our hands grow weak. We grasp hold of his hand, and thus we also hold on to one another’s hands, and we become one single subject, not just one thing. I, but no longer I: this is the formula of Christian life rooted in baptism, the formula of the resurrection within time. I, but no longer I: if we live in this way, we transform the world. It is a formula contrary to all ideologies of violence; it is a program opposed to corruption and to the desire for power and possession.

May Mary help us to be messengers of the light and joy of Easter for all our brethren.



Christine Rossi from Lenexa, KS writes:

Boy this is such an emotional day for me as I watch Pope Benedict leave. I know he is being honest about why he is leaving, but I want to hang onto his robes as he walks away. When he came to the United States, my heart was touched by his every word for us. I copied most of his homilies so that I could share his beautiful words, words from heaven.

There are so many images of him kneeling in prayer and I can only think that our culture was so hard on this man of peace...this gift to the world. Forgive us all, Holy Father, and thank you for touching our hearts. When Al and I were in Rome, I was privileged to get tickets that were only 4 rows away from his outside audience. I got many pictures of him but the one that is my favorite is when he turned to my direction and waved with a smile on his face, how special.

Kolbean Prayer to Mary Mother of the Church

Mary, Mother of the Church, I come before you in the spirit of St. Maximilian Kolbe, who consecrated his Franciscan life and work to you without reserve. You accepted Maximilian's self-offering; accept me. You led Maximilian to Christ; lead me. You formed Maximilian into a mirror of Christ; form me. Your

union with Maximilian provided the backdrop for his works of evangelization and heroic acts of charity. Please grant, through the intercession of St. Maximilian, that I might fully collaborate with you and the Holy Spirit as an instrument for the upbuilding of Christ's Church. Amen.

March Fr. Kolbe Missionaries Calendar

- 1** 7PM Young Adults – Jillian – Jessica Ruiz on Papal Elections
- 1-3** MI Retreat – Fr. Gregory Dick, OPraem - Ada
- 6** MI Spanish Village – 9am, rosary, talk on *Porta Fidei*, confession, Mass, lunch
The Key to a Happy Life, Book Study, Santa Clarita – 7pm - Jillian
- 7** Journey of Healing Lenten Series – On Jesus healing ministry in the synoptic Gospels, 7-9PM - Jillian
- 9** MI Retiro de Silencio para la Cuaresma, 9-4pm
- 10** Aspirant Fr. Kolbe Volunteers formation, 1:30-4PM
- 13** *The Key to a Happy Life*, Book Study, Santa Clarita – 7pm - Jillian
- 14** Journey of Healing Lenten Series – On Jesus healing ministry in the synoptic Gospels, 7-9PM - Jillian
- 17** Families to the MAX, 1:30-5pm - Ann
- 21** Journey of Healing Lenten Series, 7-9PM - Jillian
- 22-24** Fr. Kolbe Volunteer Retreat, Prince of Peace Abbey, Fr. Pio, CFR
- 28** **Holy Thursday**
- 29** **Good Friday**
- 30** **EASTER SUNDAY – Christ has Risen, Alleluia!**
- 29-April 6** Divine Mercy Novena

MI Teen Programs 2013, Kamp Kuper, Escondido, CA

June 30 – July 5 Girls MI Teen Program

July 7 – 11 Guys MI Teen Program

Interested in being a leader, contact Jillian

Click onto www.kolbemission.org/en for further information on events sponsored by the Missionaries.