



Militia Immaculata Okanagan

NEWSLETTER

December 2012 Vol. 3/Issue 2

From Father Sebastian

Dear Members of the Militia of the Immaculate,

I wish you all a very happy Feast of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Our Blessed Virgin Mary. It is the Patronal Feast of our parish as well since our parish is dedicated to her under the title of Immaculate Conception. So in one sense, many of us are twice blessed: both as members of the MI and as members of the Immaculate Conception Parish. How fortunate we are to have her as our mother and our guide leading us to Jesus!

As we celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, I would like to reflect on her great hymn of 'Magnificat'. This Gospel reminds us that as people of faith we must always be humble before God and grateful to God. "My soul glorifies the Lord...He has looked on the lowliness of His servant..." are all words coming from a humble and grateful heart. That heart also enjoys a serene trust in the Lord, "From now on all generations will call me blessed; the Almighty has done great things for me; holy is His name."

For me at least, the most radical statement in that whole hymn of praise is, "From now on all generations will call me blessed..." How did Mary, a humble woman of Nazareth, know that? It was revealed to her by God Himself. The closest parallel we have in the whole Bible to this wonderful revelation to Mary is what God speaks to Abraham. "...I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing...and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Our God is a God of blessings; He has blessed us with the gifts of life, family, friends, talents. But most importantly He has blessed us with the gift of His only begotten Son, so that believing in Him, we may come to the fullness of life in His eternal kingdom. God Bless!

With The Immaculate In God's Family

Meditation by Father Maximilian Kolbe, August 1940

(From The Kolbe Reader, Marytown Press, 2007)

The aim of creation, the end of man himself, is the love of God, Creator and Father - an ever greater love, the divinization of man, his return to God from whom he came, union with God, a fruitful love. So that love for the Father might become even more perfect, infinitely more perfect, the love of the Son, Jesus made itself manifest. He came down to earth, died on the cross and remains in the Holy Eucharist in order to arouse love for himself in hearts.

But so that the love for the Son might burn more intensely, and so that in this way love for the Father might be ever more

Mightily inflamed, help came to us from the Holy Spirit, from the Immaculate, the mother full of mercy, the Mediatrix of all graces, and earthly creature like ourselves, who strongly attracts hearts to herself and to the motherly heart.

And as the love of God for creation descends to earth from the Father through the Son and the Holy Spirit, so, too, through the Holy Spirit and the Son the response to his love arises, the reaction, the love of creatures for the Father.

The love of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit flames eternally; the love of the Father, of Jesus and of the Immaculate knows no imperfection. Only man (not always and not in all things) responds imperfectly to this love with his own love. To arouse that love for the Immaculate, therefore, by enkindling it in one's own heart, to communicate this fire to those who live close to us, to set on fire with this love all souls and each one in particular, those who live now and those who will live in the future, to make this flame burst forth evermore intensely and without restriction in ourselves and all over the earth - such is our purpose. Everything else is just a means.

An effect resembles the cause that produced it. Consequently every creature shows in itself some resemblance to God; and the more perfect the creature is, the more evident is this resemblance. God the Holy Trinity is love. So the reciprocal love of persons who come together in a family is an authentic echo of divine love... the mutual love of father, mother, children, etc. Much more evidently does this love show itself in the spiritual field, which joins together the intellect, the will and the being itself. Any representation of this love, even the most spiritual and perfect will always remain infinitely far removed from the very fount of love which is God.

Even if we could establish thousands and thousands of degrees, each more perfect, each more spiritually pure than the last, there would still remain an infinite distance between even the most elevated of these degrees and the source of love itself.

God brings himself down towards his own creature and joins himself to it in a love which annihilates that whole infinite space; he makes it part of his own family, makes of it one of his own children. The soul is regenerated in the sacred waters of baptism and thus becomes God's child. Water, which purifies everything over which it runs, is a symbol of her who purifies every soul that draws near to her. It is a symbol of the Immaculate, of her who is without stain; upon whoever is washed in this water the grace of the Holy Spirit descends. The Holy Spirit, the divine Spouse of the Immaculate, acts only in her and through her; he communicates supernatural life, the life of grace, the divine life, the sharing in divine love, in the divinity itself.

The child of God, as a member of the divine family, has God the Father for his father and the mother of God for his mother. He has the Son of God for brother; he becomes God's heir, and is joined to the other members of this divine family through love. Nor is this all. The Son of God selects spouses from among souls; he unites himself with them in a "spousal" love, and through him they become the mothers of many, many other souls. O soul! Abandon yourself into the hands of your Father!

Prayer in Time of Trial

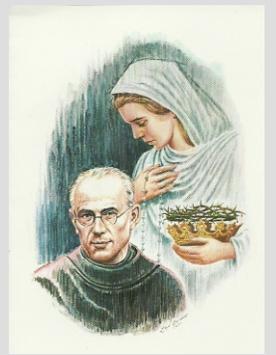
Saint Maximilian, we thank God for the good example of your life.

You teach us to love and thus overcome our hatred to those who harm us.

You teach us to hope and thus conquer the depression and despair that so often overwhelm us.

You teach us courage by your daring enterprises for God and sacrifice of self as the Immaculata's instrument.

Pray for us now that Mary, our mother, and Jesus, her Son, will bring to our troubled spirit peace, calm and joy.



The Militia Immaculata movement is an international public association of the faithful, founded by St. Maximilian Kolbe in 1917. Its mission is to promote a total consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary for the purpose of spiritual renewal for individuals and society. The MI goal is to bring about the reign of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. According to St. Maximilian the MI is, "a global vision of Catholic life under a new form, consisting in the bond of the Immaculata, our universal Mediatrix before Jesus."

Be Open To Mary's Invitation

From A Grandmother

Whoever you are, whatever your age, whatever your strengths or weaknesses, Mary can use you to help spread her Son's kingdom upon earth. Nothing limits her except our will to allow her to use us to spread the kingdom of God's love and mercy.

I would like to share with you how Mary used an infant baby girl who was consecrated before her birth to her Immaculate Heart by the baby's parents and also afterwards. She was born with severe physical abnormalities and was not expected to survive birth or more than a few days and weeks afterwards. She was born with Edward's disease (Trisomy 18), a condition in which she had an extra chromosome in every cell of her body that affected her whole physical development. She had some malfunction of her internal organs and other abnormalities.

What this baby taught me is that our humanity is far more than what we perceive in a normal human body. It is not only our human body that defines our humanity. It is the spirit that is hidden within the form of the body that gives our humanity a sense of dignity and worth. The little baby I refer to had such a spirit and touched so many hearts far and wide even though she could barely utter any sounds, move her limbs, or do anything normal for a developing infant. She struggled to survive both in the womb and after birth with a very strong, and courageous spirit. Throughout her seven months of life she amazed the medical staff and profession. She kept rebounding from one medical crisis to another bringing her ever closer to the end of her life. Just when her parents thought she would not make it another day, she regained her strength and fought valiantly. This happened so often that the doctors would no longer make any predictions about her life as she had far surpassed their expectations. It was a miracle in itself that she survived as long as she did weighing no more than five pounds. After her death this summer, I learned that people everywhere had been praying for her. So many people told me that she had touched their lives in a very special way. As an example, the baby's life inspired a family to go to church. After the funeral, a little girl asked her mother many questions. In an effort to find answers, the mother decided the family should go the church on a regular basis.

So much compassion and charity flowed from the hearts of so many people far and wide who were touched by the courage and struggles this little one endured in her sufferings and short life. This outpouring of love is a sign of the kingdom of God spreading upon earth. This little infant did nothing except exemplify through her short life the power of her valiant spirit that was truly amazing when all the odds were stacked against her. She is a sign that everyone has a special dignity and value because of the spirit that animates our human body that glorifies our creator as His plan is fulfilled in our life. Baby Mary Elizabeth was buried with a large miraculous medal in her tiny coffin as a sign of being entrusted into Mary's hands.

I asked myself how could such a tiny infant evoke so much love and charity from so many people who felt a spiritual connection with this little one. I realize it is due to Mother Mary's influence teaching each of us the value of a human life that comes not from a perfect and viable human body but from the spirit that vivifies the body from the moment of conception on. Just as Jesus mother, Mary, used a tiny infant to spread her message, she can use anyone to spread the kingdom of God regardless of our infirmities or weaknesses. We only need to say "yes" to Mary just as she said "yes" to the Father.

Membership Fees/Donations

The membership fees of 2012 were due May 31st. Thank you to everyone who paid the fees. Donations are *always* welcome. Thank you for your continued generosity and support.

MI Okanagan Executive

Father Sebastian Puthenpura
Annette Leib
Eileen Collins
Jerry Dusik

Spiritual Director
Co-ordinator
Assistant Co-ord.
Treasurer

Newsletter by Colleen Finlon



Marytown... the Militia Immaculata National Shrine for USA and Canada in Libertyville, Illinois held a conference in October open to everyone called Porta Fidei - a pilgrimage with MARY through the Open Door of Faith.

New Evangelization From Our MI Friends In Vernon

By Mark Lopianowski & Emma Brooks

As part of the MI Apostolate, we are now exploring a new approach to evangelization in groups at a parish level. It is a retreat program based on Fr. Michael E. Gaitley, MIC's Program "Hearts Afire", (www.allheartsafire.org) which was initiated in 2011 and has been enthusiastically received in the US. The first part of the program, being assessed by our Village throughout October/November, is called "33 Days to Morning Glory". It is a six-week group retreat based on a book of the same name leading to Total Consecration to Mary. Our first group of ten people meets once a week for 90 minutes for discussion and viewing of a 30 min video by Fr. Gaitley, and in between each participant is assigned daily short readings and prayers.

Every week we read about how one of the four giants of Marian consecration (St. Louis de Montfort, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Blessed John Paul II) lived out his or her consecration to Jesus through Mary. We not only read but we also deeply "ponder their message in our hearts". The end goal of this retreat is to lead us to formally re-consecrate (or consecrate for new participants) to Jesus through Mary using a consecration formula that combines the approaches of the four saints. The preparation period is longer than either the "MI Nine Days" or "St. Louis de Montfort 33 Days" but the initial experience is an extraordinarily rewarding spiritual journey through the teachings of the four Marian saints opening our hearts to new depths of relationships with our immaculate spiritual mother Mary. We find this retreat to be very closely coupled to the statements of the MI Catechism and we view the group approach as a way to become even more effective instruments of Mary to extending Blessed John Paul II's "new evangelization" and leading to a revival of the faith life at the parish level.

Our schedule calls for finishing the retreat by November 24, 2012 and providing an evaluation report, including some personal testimonials to the executive committee, village leaders and spiritual director in Kelowna, BC, Canada.

2013 MI MASS SCHEDULE

9 AM First Saturday Mass	Feast Day Mass
Jan 5	June 1 9AM 5:15PM
Feb 2	July 6 Sept 7 Aug 15
March 2	Aug 3 Dec 7
April 6	Oct 5
May 4	Nov 2

No Mass in March for the Solemnity of Annunciation as it falls in Holy Week.

For more information phone 250-496-5654 or 250-862-8115.