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Knight of the Immaculata

The 85th Anniversary of the death of St. Maximilian Kolbe

Heroic love until the end

Militia Immaculatæ Traditional Observance

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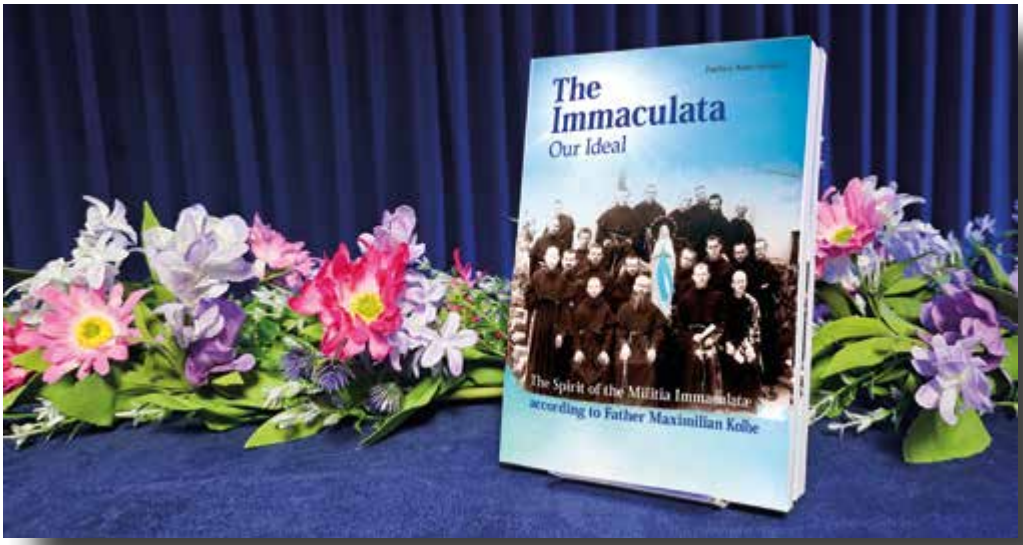
The Immaculata
Our Ideal

The Immaculata, Our Ideal, written by Fr. Karl Stehlin and containing many quotations from the lectures and writings of St. Maximilian Kolbe, is a priceless treasure for the clergy who are loyal to the Tradition of the Church and for all the faithful as well.

Indeed, priests and lay people want not only to survive these extremely dangerous times unscathed, but also to sanctify themselves, to make progress in the spiritual life in these concrete circumstances and to bring it to perfection by means of these very circumstances.

Merciful God has given us in these days of confusion a bright beacon, a powerful general in this decisive battle, an infinitely loving mother in these dire straits, who gathers under her protective mantle all who entrust and consecrate themselves to her: the Immaculata. Her role in our personal, social, and ecclesiastical life has been elaborated theologically in the works of Father Maximilian Kolbe.

Every Christian will decide to enlist in Mary's army, in order to fight for faith and morality, for the Church and Christendom.



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Dear Knights of the Immaculata!

In times of war (a terrible, very real war is currently raging), it is very difficult to love one's neighbour, and especially one's enemies. Yet this is the greatest commandment after the love of God, and if we do not fulfil it, we cannot enter Heaven.

Exactly 85 years ago, Fr. Maximilian Kolbe offered his life for a fellow prisoner sentenced to death in the starvation bunker at Auschwitz. We wish to commemorate this exceptional event in this issue of Knight of the Immaculata. The heroic example of our holy Founder motivates us to follow in his footsteps and learn true love from him.

As the testimonies of those who survived the war – fellow prisoners of Fr. Maximilian in Auschwitz – indicate, he carried out an apostolate of good example in the camp, thereby drawing the prisoners closer to God and the Immaculate Virgin, and inspiring them to perform good and noble deeds. To Henryk Sienkiewicz, a prisoner number 2714, with whom he shared a cell in Block 18, Father Kolbe once said: "I am glad that the Immaculate Virgin has allowed me to be here, where I can win over for her the hearts of people who find themselves in difficult circumstances and need comfort."

This prisoner also recounted the following story: "Whilst working outside the camp in the Buna Werke Sonderkommando I was able to obtain food from the local civilian population, who were very sympathetic towards us; however, bringing it into the camp was extremely risky, as it

could even have cost me my life. I told Father Maximilian that I was afraid to take the risk of bringing something for my fellow prisoners. Then he said to me: 'Entrust yourself to the care of the Immaculate Virgin, and I will pray fervently, and she will help you'. Inspired by the faith in the Immaculate Virgin, I began bringing food into the camp, always avoiding misfortune. On one occasion, I was carrying a two-kilo loaf of bread tucked into my trousers, with a kilo of bacon tied into each trouser leg, when there was a search at the gate (those who survived the camp know what a search at the gate was). After an SS man had frisked me, I was allowed through the camp gate. I told Father Maximilian the whole story, and he said to me then: 'Trust in the Immaculate Virgin, and she will show you her grace more than once.'"

Brunon Borgowiec, a former prisoner of the Auschwitz camp, testified under oath on the 22nd of October 1946 in Chorzów: "When I was to carry Father Kolbe's body out of the cell and opened the door, I noticed that Father Kolbe was sitting on the floor leaning against the wall with his eyes open. His body was spotless and radiant. Anyone would have been struck by that posture and would have thought he was some saint. His face was bathed in a serene glow."

One might ask why Fr. Maximilian left this world before he had fulfilled his great vision of winning all souls for the Immaculate Virgin? He answered this question long before his death, when, on the 15th of November 1919, he said to the Franciscan seminarians in Kraków: "But this life will pass away, and then our true reward will begin. No effort, however small, no suffering, however slight, undertaken for the glory of God, will go unrewarded, and this will be so for all eternity. (...) After [our] death, the Immaculate Virgin will complete her work through us, or rather, it is only then that we will be able to console the Heart of Jesus far more than on this poor earth (...)".

In 1972, in a letter to Niepokalanów, his benefactor, Prince Jan Drucki-Lubecki, wrote: "I have always considered my friendship and collaboration with Fr. Maximilian to be one of the greatest graces bestowed by God."

Let us be co-workers of St Maximilian Kolbe! And, following his example, let us be instruments in the hands of the Immaculate Virgin!

Fr. Karl Stehlin,
Director of the Militia Immaculatæ Traditional Observance

The final days on Earth

On the 28th of May, Fr. Maximilian Kolbe was with more than 300 others who were deported from Pawiak prison in Warsaw to a concentration camp in Auschwitz. There he received his striped convict's garments and was branded with the number 16670. He was put to work immediately by carrying blocks of stone for the construction of a crematorium wall.

On the last day of May he was assigned with other priests to the Babice section which was under the direction of "Bloody" Krott, an ex-criminal. "These men are layabouts and parasites", said the Commandant to Krott, "get them working." Krott forced the priests to cut and carry huge tree trunks. The work went on all day without a stop and had to be done running — with the aid of vicious blows from the guards. Despite having only one lung, Fr. Maximilian accepted the work and the blows with surprising calm. Krott conceived a relentless hatred against the Franciscan and gave him heavier tasks than the others.

Men gathered in secret to hear his words of love and encouragement, but it was his example which counted for most. Father Zygmunt Rusczak recounts: "Each time I saw Fr. Kolbe in the courtyard I felt within myself an extraordinary effusion of his goodness. Although he wore the same ragged clothes as the rest of us, with the same tin can hanging from his belt, one forgot his wretched exterior and was conscious only of the charm of his inspired countenance and of his radiant holiness."

In the summer of 1941, on the last day of July, the camp siren

announced that there had been an escape. Lagerfuhrer Fritzsch announced that on account of the escape of the three prisoners, ten prisoners would be picked in reprisal from the blocks in which the fugitives had lived and would be assigned to the Bunker (the underground starvation cell).

After the group of doomed men had already been selected, a prisoner stepped out from the ranks of one of the Blocks, Fr. Kolbe. He spoke directly to Fritzsch. When making his request of replacement, Fr. Kolbe stood at attention and pointed at a former non-commissioned officer. It could be inferred from the expression on Fritzsch's face that he was surprised at Fr. Kolbe's action. As the sign was given, Fr. Kolbe joined the ranks of the doomed and the non-commissioned officer left the ranks of the doomed. Firzsch had consented to the exchange. A little later, the doomed men were marched off in the direction of Block 13, the death Block."

The non-commissioned officer was Franciszek Gajowniczek. When the sentence of doom had been pronounced, Gajowniczek had cried out in despair, "Oh, my poor wife, my poor children. I shall never see them again." It was then that the unexpected had happened, and that from among the ranks of those temporarily reprieved, prisoner 16670 had stepped forward and offered himself in the other man's place. Then the ten condemned men were led off to the dreaded Bunker, to the airless underground cells were men died slowly without food or water.

Bruno Borgowiec was an eyewitness of those last terrible days, for he was an assistant to the janitor and an interpreter in the underground Bunkers. He tells us what happened: "In the cell of the poor wretches there were daily loud prayers, the rosary and singing, in which prisoners from neighbouring cells also joined. When no SS-men were in the Block, I went to the Bunker to talk to the men and comfort them. Fervent prayers and songs to the Holy Mother resounded in all the corridors of the Bunker. I had the impression I was in a church.

Father Kolbe was leading and the prisoners responded in unison. They were often so deep in prayer that they did not even hear that inspecting SS-men had descended to the Bunker; and the voices fell silent only at the loud yelling of their visitors. When the cells were opened the poor wretches cried loudly and begged for a piece of bread and for water, which they did not receive, however. If any of the stronger ones approached the door he was immediately kicked in the stomach by the SS-men, so that falling backwards on the cement floor he was instantly killed him; or he was shot to death.

Father Kolbe bore up bravely, he did not beg and did not complain but raised the spirits of the others. Since they had grown very weak, prayers were now only whispered. At every inspection, when almost all the others were now lying on the floor, Fr. Kolbe was seen kneeling or standing in the centre as he looked cheerfully in the face of the SS-men.

Two weeks passed in this way. Meanwhile one after another they died, until only Fr. Kolbe was left. This the authorities felt was too long; the cell was needed for new victims. So one day they brought in the head of the sick quarters, a German, a common criminal named Bock, who gave Fr. Kolbe an injection of carbolic acid in the vein of his left arm. Father Kolbe, with a prayer on his lips, himself gave his arm voluntary to the executioner.

Unable to watch this I left under the pretext of work to be done. Immediately after the SS-men with the executioner had left I returned to the cell, where I found Fr. Kolbe leaning in a sitting position against the back wall with his eyes open and his head dropping sideways. His face was calm and radiant."

The Immaculata
in the life of St. Maximilian

It is impossible to understand the life and mission of St. Maximilian without reference to the Mother of God, for were it not for his deep love for Mary, the Knights of the Immaculate could not have existed.

Father Kolbe was utterly convinced of the truth that all graces flow into the world through Mary's hands; therefore, through his life, he confirmed the words of St. Bernard of Siena, who wrote that 'She is the neck of our head, through which the head bestows all spiritual gifts upon his mystical body'. Saint Maximilian wanted to snatch every soul from the hands of Satan and give it to our Saviour — he knew full well that such a great work could only be accomplished through Mary.

To understand the important place Mary held in the saint's life, one must briefly examine the Marian themes in his biography — particularly during the early years of his life, when his spirituality was taking shape and his mission on this earth was taking form.

The founder of the Militia Immaculatæ grew up in a deeply religious family. On the day of his birth, he was baptised at the parish of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Zduńska Wola (Poland). Later, due to difficult financial circumstances, the Kolbe family moved to Pabianice. Little Rajmund was not an easy child — it didn't take much to provoke a fierce outburst of anger. His mother would say: "Mundek, Mundek, what on earth will become of you?" The boy, however, had a deep devotion to Mary. Once, he bought himself a small statue of the Blessed Mother for five kopecks. At home, the family prayed with great devotion — there was a small altar there, at first with a painting of Our Lady of Częstochowa, and later with a statue of the Immaculate.

One day, young Raymond had a vision of Mary, who showed him two crowns: a white one and a red one. The boy understood that the white one symbolised purity, and the red one martyrdom. He accepted both crowns. From that moment on, he changed; he

began to control his fiery temper. When he was thirteen, he moved to the Franciscan monastery in Lwów. It was there that he made his vow: "With my face to the ground, I promised the Blessed Virgin Mary reigning on the altar that I would fight for her. How — I did not know, but I imagined fighting with physical weapons." Later, the novice master changed this vow to a daily prayer of 'Under Your Protection'. It was only later that St. Maximilian understood what his fight for Mary was to consist of.

In 1912, he went to Rome to study, from whence he returned to Poland in 1919. On the 11th of February 1913, a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes was brought to the collegiate chapel in the Eternal City, bearing the inscription running around her head: "I am the Immaculate Conception". Thanks to the water from Lourdes, the finger on his right hand, which had been festering and would not heal and was threatened with amputation, miraculously recovered.

The Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Zduńska Wola — the place where Rajmund Kolbe was baptised

Since the retreat he went on October 1914, he began to refer to Mary as the Immaculata,

and he invoked Mary's name in times of difficulty, before starting work, and 'armed himself' with it as he left his cell. During the retreat prior to his ordination to subdiaconate (1916), he wrote: "Entrust yourself entirely to the merciful Providence of God, that is, to the Immaculata, and be at peace, and in peace do God's Will" and "strive for the salvation of all by every possible means". The year 1917 saw these resolutions put into action and the founding of the Knights of the Immaculate. It was then that the saint witnessed the activities of freemasonry, which openly declared its desire to destroy the Church. It was also in that year that the young Franciscan fell ill with tuberculosis. The day after his ordination (on the 29th of April 1918), he celebrated his "first Mass with the Miraculous Medal at the altar where the Immaculate Virgin had deigned to appear to Fr. Ratisbonne [...]".

The altar in St. Matthew's Church in Pabianice. It was at this altar that Rajmund Kolbe received a vision of two crowns (a white one and a red one)

This brief biographical sketch highlights just how important Mary was to St. Maximilian. She clearly guided him, enabling him

to grow spiritually and to love the Immaculate Virgin ever more deeply. He discovered the mystery of total devotion to Mary and his mission to save souls. Mary was the centre of his life, and not just the centre, but his whole life! He devoted himself to her completely and encouraged his fellow brothers and the Knights to do the same. He also desired such devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary for every person. He was deeply imbued with the apostolic spirit — he wanted to win the whole world for our best Mother! He paid no heed to what others thought or said about him; he devoted his whole self to the mission of saving souls. Mary was his comfort in the most difficult moments. He entrusted his task to her — he always emphasised that he should do only Mary's will, and thus the will of God himself — no more, no less.

When he returned home after studying in Rome, he settled in

Bust of St. Maximilian in the Church of St. Andrew delle Fratte in Rome; it is located right next to the Chapel of St. Michael the Archangel, where Alphonse Ratisbonne was converted

Kraków. At that time, he was seriously ill with tuberculosis — he was, in fact, on the verge of death. The doctors gave him little hope. Although he found it so difficult (he could not speak loudly, walk quickly or work hard), he tried his best to fulfil his duties and, moreover, to win the whole world for the Immaculata! He was mis-

understood by his fellow priests. How could this seriously ill priest, who needed to be replaced (St. Maximilian visited a sanatorium), even think of the spiritual conquest of the whole world?! And indeed, from a human point of view, this is impossible, and the idea would have to be considered mad. Yet with God's power and under Mary's protection, anything is possible, even with such a frail body and without support or money!

Once the young priest had gathered a sizeable group of Knights — first amongst the clergy, and later amongst the laity as well — he knew that this was not enough. He was limited by space, so he longed to publish a magazine so that news of Mary might reach every household. When he received his superior's approval, he was happy, for he knew that since he had been granted permission, such was the will of the Immaculate. He rejoiced that, thanks to the magazine, he would be able to kindle more hearts. Father Kolbe had no money; the country was in the process of re-

Exhibition at the birthplace of St. Maximilian in Zduńska Wola

The chapel in Niepokalanów

construction following the First World War and the period of annexation, so he had to go and ask for donations, which was a great humiliation for him. However, he managed to publish the first issue of *Rycerz Niepokalanej* (*Knight of the Immaculata*); then the second and subsequent one. After some time, he was transferred to Grodno, where he set up a printing press. In 1927, he founded Niepokalanów, about which he wrote: "This monastery is called Niepokalanów, the City of the Immaculata, because it belongs entirely to the Immaculata, is devoted to her without reserve, together with all the hearts that beat within its walls, together with all the machines, engines, schools, parts, cares, difficulties and debts." He loved Mary so much that he founded a place entirely and solely dedicated to her.

However, his missionary zeal would not allow him to stop there. He wanted to win the whole world for God, which is why, in 1930, he travelled to Nagasaki

in Japan, where, after just one month, he published The Knight of the Immaculata in Japanese. There, he founded a second Niepokalanów — Mugenzai no Sono (Garden of the Immaculata). The letters he wrote during his six-year stay on the mission perfectly outline his Marian spirituality. The content of a letter from the beginning of his stay in Nagasaki, addressed to Fr Metody Rejentowicz on the 11th of December 1930, is worth quoting as it summarises the life and work of St Maximilian: "I am writing briefly, for I am very swamped with work. Well, the task here is very simple: to work oneself to the bone, to wear oneself out, to be regarded by one's own people as little less than a madman, and to die exhausted for the Immaculate. (...) — Is this not a beautiful ideal of life? — A war to conquer the whole world, the

The magazine Knight of the Immaculate in Japanese; on the left: the first issue published in May 1930 (shortly after his arrival in Japan); on the right: the May 1936 issue (before Fr. Maximilian's departure for Poland)

hearts of everyone and each one individually, starting with oneself. Our strength lies in acknowledging our own foolishness, weakness and wretchedness, and in boundless trust in the goodness and power of the Immaculata. Nature may rebel, casting a longing glance at a life that is, after all, calmer and more comfortable under established conditions, but this is precisely what sacrifice entails: to rise higher than our carnal nature can draw us to — All hope lies in the Immaculate. So take heart, Dear Brother, come and perish from hunger, exhaustion, humiliation and suffering for the Immaculata."

Saint Maximilian lived solely to win people over, with Mary and for Mary, and through her — for God. In every hardship, trial and humiliation, he placed himself in her hands and allowed himself to be guided by them. Mary was his inspiration, comfort, solace and goal — he saw that this was the only way to lead souls to God; that it was only through her Immaculate Heart that he could lead souls to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, to which he himself had a great devotion. He emphasised that since Mary is the Mediatrix of all graces, in order to obtain the grace of conversion for pagans, freemasons and apostates, one must lead them to this very Mediatrix.

The founder of the Knights of the Immaculate called upon us to be her "servant and child, and slave, and thing, and property". Through his life and death, he set us an example of precisely such total self-surrender to Mary's disposal. Let us therefore ask St. Maximilian to intercede with God for us to obtain at least a share of the zeal that was his, and then Mary will be able to lead us as she pleases — and this is the simplest and shortest path to great holiness.

M

85 years since a sacrifice that bears Knights

When we commemorate the death of St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe, it is easy to dwell on the nobility of his final moments. The starvation cell in Auschwitz, the voluntary sacrifice of his life for a fellow prisoner, his calm amidst the oppression of the camp, his prayer where others lost hope — all this moves the heart and inspires admiration. For the world, it was a heroic act; for the Church, a testimony of holiness. Where man was reduced to a number, the dignity of a child of God was revealed, and the supposed triumph of hell was transformed into the triumph of the Immaculate. The motto repeated by St. Maximilian — that only love is a creative force — resounded in the highest sense. The memory of St. Kolbe, however, must not stop merely at a sentimental reflection on the past. His sacrifice does not belong solely to history, but endures in the fruits it bears. Eighty-five years have passed, and the world still needs Knights. More than ever before, it needs souls who are ready to live entirely

for the Immaculate and to fight for the salvation of themselves and others.

Saint Maximilian viewed reality through a supernatural lens and thus saw that humanity's greatest tragedy is not poverty, illness or political turmoil, but the loss of God. He knew, and often reminded his fellow brothers, that the immortal soul can be saved or damned; that is why he constantly pointed to the goal: to win as many souls as possible for Christ through the Immaculate Virgin. Such a way of thinking is particularly needed today, for we live in times when many people have lost awareness of the existence of grace, eternity and sin. Modern man cares for

St. Maximilian's room/cell with a desk in the Japanese Niepokalanów (left) and the Polish Niepokalanów (right)

the body, comfort and success, whilst neglecting his soul.

It is not difficult to see the decline of man — nations are turning away from God's law, families are falling apart, the innocence of children is being systematically destroyed, immorality is presented as freedom, and rebellion against God as progress. The crisis within the Church itself also greatly weakens souls through, for instance, doctrinal confusion, the decline of the spirit of sacrifice, and the weakening of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. Another worrying sign of our times is indifference towards devotion to the Mother of God. It is not merely a matter of the decline in devotion or the neglect of prayer; the point is that the Immaculate Virgin is being increasingly marginalised and overlooked. Her role in the work of salvation, as well as in supporting us in the spiritual struggle, is being falsely diminished.

It is precisely at this time that the programme of spir-

itual combat presented by St. Maximilian is particularly relevant. He recognised that when love for Mary wanes, faith also wanes, and a soul separated from its Mother very easily becomes an orphan in this world. That is why the saint pointed out that it is precisely total consecration to the Immaculate Virgin and an apostolate carried out by all legitimate means for the salvation of souls that can rebuild the world. We must strive for this, so that human hearts that have grown cold may be rekindled with love for the Blessed Mother. She who will crush the serpent's head remains, even today, the terror of hell. Whoever truly entrusts themselves to Mary does not become weaker, but stronger, for they cease to rely on themselves and begin to belong to her whom God has made the Treasury of all graces.

It is worth noting, however, that St. Maximilian did not seek to build a pious group based on mutual goodwill. He

wanted an army of souls won over by the Immaculate Virgin. He wanted people ready to sacrifice their time, energy, talents and comfort, and — if God's will so required — even their lives. In Auschwitz, he fulfilled

through his own actions what he had taught, showing that the Knighthood is not a metaphor, but a reality.

That is why we need true Knights today, Knights of flesh and blood! We need souls who will not only wear the Miraculous Medal, but who, by consciously dedicating themselves to their Mother, will submit to her in every little task and follow each of her steps. **We need a renewal of the Knights of the Immaculate**, who will truly show that here on earth we are the Church Militant.

How, then, are we to renew ourselves? We must return to the Immaculate Virgin with truly devoted love.

First, by our own example: a Catholic home should be a stronghold of the Immaculate Virgin.

Next, through our words: calm, prudent, yet courageous conversation, so that our words may be hurled like stones from a sling held by the Mother of God.

Next, through apostolic action: every Miraculous Medal handed out, every leaflet distributed, every act of help towards one's neighbour, every support for the works of Tradition, brings true joy to our Heavenly Lady.

Finally, through suffering: for many a conversion has been obtained through a mother's tears, through humiliation patiently endured, through a hidden sacrifice offered to the Lord Jesus by His beloved Mother.

The renewal of the M.I. therefore begins with the conversion of the Knights themselves. So that they – through their lives lived in sanctifying grace, their faithful wearing and promotion of the Medal, their fortitude in family and

work, and their readiness and concern for the struggle to save souls — may be instruments of the Immaculate and an inspiration to others. All this following the example of St. Maximilian. This is a task for valiant Knights; for those who are wholehearted, not half-hearted. The Immaculate calls for courageous witnesses, not complacent observers. She calls for souls belonging to her entirely.

After 85 years, St. Maximilian's sacrifice remains as relevant as ever and St. Maximilian invites us: do not be afraid, do not delay, do not let your zeal fade. Souls are perishing, the Church is suffering, and… the Immaculate Virgin awaits. For where, humanly speaking, everything seems lost, it is precisely there that her triumph is most fully revealed!

50 new Knights in Carouge, near Geneva

Geneva is the cradle of Calvinism and a Protestant canton; the local authorities prohibit, amongst other things, processions on the city's streets. It is therefore a territory that must be won over for the Blessed Virgin Mary.

For several years, a desire had been growing in the hearts of the faithful at St. Joseph's Chapel in Carouge to consecrate themselves to the Immaculate Virgin according to the spirituality of St. Maximilian. In December 2025, the new prior, Fr. Cyprien du Crest, decided to prepare and admit the first members to the Knights of the Immaculate in the near future. What a great joy this is for the many faithful who have enthusiastically embraced this project! Some of them discovered the great work of St. Maximilian Kolbe on this occasion.

The admission ceremony took place on the 27th of March 2026. It was presided over by Fr. Karl Stehlin, who, firstly, celebrated Holy Mass with a homily on the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary as Co-Redemptrix in the work of salvation for all poor sinners.

After the Holy Mass, Fr. Stehlin admitted 50 people into the Knights of the Immaculate, whilst existing members renewed their consecrations. The assembly then listened to a talk in which the

Director of the M.I. outlined the history of St. Maximilian's work. It is clear from the account that the M.I. is the culmination of the teachings of St. Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort, who died too soon to develop certain points of his Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

St. Louis taught us to love God, whilst St. Maximilian Kolbe completed his legacy by adding the aspect of love for one's neighbour, as well as the necessity of caring for the salvation of poor sinners, and especially freemasons. Father Stehlin also recalled the historical context of the organisation's founding in 1917, marked by strong (including spiritual) opposition to the freemasons, who marched through Rome with their banner, chanting that the Pope would become a slave of Satan. In the same year, Our Lady of Fatima appeared to the shepherd children, the precursors of the spirit of the Knights of the Immaculate, who surrendered themselves to her holy slavery.

Holy slavery is the means by which a Knight becomes an instrument of the Immaculata. He cooperates with her and allows her to shape him in the battle for souls!

The Knights returned home with a fervent resolve to help win the hearts of the people of Geneva and of every person whom Divine Providence places in their path.

Steffi Cosyns

189 new Knights in Kenya

On the 23rd and 24th of May 2026, Fr. Karl Stehlin, Superior of the District of Poland, visited Kenya to lead a Marian Retreat and conduct enrolments into the Militia Immaculatæ of the Traditional Observance. Father Stehlin was the first SSPX priest to visit Kenya, back in 1990.

Recognized as a renowned Mariologist and expert on the Message of Fatima, Fr. Stehlin delivered a powerful two-day conference to hundreds of faithful at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Lavington, Kenya, which is the sole Priory in East Africa.

A Powerful Pentecost Homily

Father Stehlin celebrated both the Vigil of Pentecost and Pentecost Sunday Mass. In his sermon, he exhorted the faithful to have recourse to the Blessed Virgin Mary. He described the Immaculata as a soul so entirely receptive to God that He filled her completely and totally with the Holy Ghost.

Through the Immaculata, we receive all the graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost. God preserved her from the slightest hesitation or stain of sin. Her *Fiat* and her total openness to the Divine Will allowed her to become our spiritual

Mother, fulfilling Christ's words from the Cross: "Son, behold Thy Mother!" (John 19:26–27).

As the *Sponsa Spiritus Sancti* (Spouse of the Holy Ghost), Our Lady serves as the channel of these divine gifts. Because she is filled with the fullness of grace and loves us as our Mother, she actively transmits these graces to her children. This profound homily served as an inspiring prelude to the highly anticipated Marian retreat, which drew attendees of all ages.

Kenya's First Traditional Marian Retreat

The Marian Retreat was a unique traditional event in Kenya, drawing at least 400 faithful from more than 102 parishes across the nation. Retreatants gathered to deepen their understanding of the Immaculata, exploring her vital role in our daily lives, our personal sanctification, and salvific history, while learning directly from a leading Mariologist.

The retreat comprised four comprehensive conferences, culminating in an interactive Q&A session covering various topics dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Enrolment into the M.I.

The definitive highlight of the weekend was the long-awaited enrolment into the Militia Im-

maculatæ on Pentecost Sunday, on the 24th of May 2026. This sacred ceremony was followed by Solemn Exposition, Eucharistic Adoration, and the recitation of the Holy Rosary. This ceremony took place at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Nairobi, Kenya where 189 Knights were enrolled into the M.I. Each new enrolee received a signed certificate of enrolment, a booklet for the 13-day consecration to the Immaculata, and the imposition of the Miraculous Medal.

Before concluding his visit, Fr. Stehlin held a specialized conference for the students of Holy Cross Catholic International School, focusing on Our Lady and the Miraculous Medal. He brought his historic visit to Kenya to a close by praying at the grave of Venerable Edel Quinn, the young Irish lay missionary who served with distinction as the Envoy of the Legion of Mary in East Africa.

On behalf of all of us at Holy Cross Catholic Priory, Kenya, we are deeply thankful for the mission of the M.I. and the unwavering zeal for souls by Fr. Stehlin. May God bless you and the Immaculate keep you under her Mantle.

Esther Kamau, Kenya

New Knights in Bredell (South Africa)

Eight people were admitted into the ranks of the Knights of the Immaculate at the chapel in Bredell (South Africa). The ceremony took place on the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A procession was also held to mark the feast day, attended by both new and existing Knights.

The March for the Queen of Poland

The Knights of the Immaculate actively took part in the March for the Queen of Poland to mark her feast day. They set up an M.I. Table in front of the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Jasna Góra Commons, where the March ended. In addition to distributing leaflets published by the M.I. Headquarters, they also collected donations for the organisation of the next march, offering rosaries in return. The table provided an opportunity for many conversations about the faith, the Tradition of the Church, and the activities of the Priestly Society of St. Pius X.

An engaged couple took an interest in the M.I. Table. They stopped to talk about the Catholic Tradition and the Tridentine Mass.

The conversation took place in a friendly atmosphere, and at the end they received Marian materials and information on the Tradition of the Church.

The Knights also spoke with a young married couple who had previously heard of the Society's chapel in Wrocław. The couple were not entirely unfamiliar with Tradition and viewed the Society's unambiguous teaching positively.

A man who stopped by the M.I. table spoke of his mother-in-law, who remembered the Catholic Tradition but had, over time, become interested in fortune-telling. He expressed concern about the current spiritual and social situation and also took an interest in the Tradition of the Church. He received materials from us for his mother-in-law and expressed a desire to remind her of the Catholic Tradition.

One of the women, despite being in a hurry, asked us for materials on conversion. She was given a leaflet entitled 'How to go to confession properly and in the Catholic way', a Miraculous Medal and various brochures.

The M.I. Table also attracted the interest of some nuns, who raised the subject of the Tridentine Mass and the activities of the Society of St. Pius X. The conversation took place in a calm and friendly atmosphere.

The M.I. stand attracted the interest of several foreigners, who received Miraculous Medals and religious images. One of the British visitors asked about the history of Jasna Góra and its significance for the Polish nation. During the conversation, the Knights briefly explained the history of the Hussite raid on Jasna Góra and the profanation of the image of Our Lady, as well as the defence of the monastery against the Swedes.

Another woman raised the topics of ecumenism, the pontificate of John Paul II, and issues related to post-conciliar reforms. During the conversation, the Knights presented the position of the Society of St. Pius X regarding post-conciliar changes and emphasised their attachment to the Tradition of the Church.

The Knights of the Immaculate Conception also met with young people associated with charismatic circles. The conversation highlighted the need for a clearer transmission of the faith and a deeper grounding in the Tradition of the Church, mainly through hearing the Traditional Latin Mass in the chapel of the Society of St. Pius X.

One of the men had heard of the Tridentine Mass before and wanted to find out more about it. He stayed with us until the march arrived, and then joined in the communal singing at the end of the event.

During the event, around 250 leaflets, many Medals and religious images were handed out. In addition, around 400 leaflets were distributed during the march itself. The stand attracted a great deal of interest from the march participants and provided an opportunity for many meaningful conversations and for bearing witness to the faith and Tradition of the Church.

Denis

In defence of the honour of the Immaculate

On the 18th of March, the Kalisz's (Poland) Knights of the Immaculate Conception hosted Fr. Łukasz Szydłowski for yet another priestly lecture of the Society of St. Pius X – this time in defence of the veneration of the Immaculate Blessed Virgin Mary following a document issued by the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith that was injurious to her.

The meeting was attended by the faithful from Kalisz and the surrounding areas, who are fighting for the survival of Tradition in their family homes and within the Catholic Church. They are full of hope that these meetings will contribute to the establishment of a Society chapel in this city in the future. They earnestly ask the Immaculate Virgin, Mediatrix of all graces, for this, and trust that her venerable Spouse, St. Joseph, so revered in Kalisz, will intercede for them to obtain this grace.

45 new Knights in Warsaw

At the end of the Montfortian retreat led in Warsaw by Fr. Karl Stehlin and Fr. Łukasz Szydłowski, nine men joined the M.I.

And on the feast of the Most Holy Trinity, Fr. Piotr Świerczek enrolled another 36 Knights.

A vocation brochure for men

The M.I. Headquarters has published a brochure prepared by the seminarians about the Sacred Heart of Jesus Seminary in Zaitzkofen. This brochure has been placed in the M.I. corners in all the chapels of the Priestly Society of St. Pius X, and was also distributed by the seminarians during their Easter visit to Poland.

Seminary alumni, together with one of their lecturers, Fr Jakub Wawrzyn, came to Poland for the Easter break. It has become a tradition that on Good Shepherd Sunday they visit one of the priories to ask for prayers for their good preparation for the beautiful yet demanding task that the priesthood is. This year, all the Polish alumni, a Hungarian, two Slovaks and an Estonian, as well as one of the religious brothers serving at the seminary, visited the priory in Libertów under the care of Fr Jakub Wawrzyn; they also visited the chapel in Katowice.

In both chapels, after Holy Mass, a meeting was held with the faithful, to whom the alumni presented the seminary. It was also an opportunity to distribute the latest brochure and to have many inspiring conversations. From Libertów, the seminary delegation, accompanied by Prior Fr. Hubert Kuszpa, went on a short tour of St Mary's Church and Wawel (Polish castle). It was a great opportunity for the seminarians to hand out vocation leaflets in Kraków's Main Square.

News from the District of Great Britain

The District of Great Britain is pleased to welcome eight new Knights to the Militia Immaculatæ.

Four were enrolled at the Church of Saints Margaret and Leonard in Edinburgh, Scotland by Fr. Sebastian Wall on the 24th of May 2026 and four were enrolled at the Chapel of St. Anne in Leicester by Fr. Dominic O'Hart on the 31st of May 2026, which was not only Trinity Sunday, but also the Feast Day of the Queenship of Our Lady — what an auspicious occasion! We wish them well and a long and valiant service.

There should have been another Knight — Bill York — who was due to be enrolled at Leicester that day but he died unexpectedly of a heart attack on Wednesday the 13th of May, at the age of 33 years while on a visit to Japan. Please pray for the repose of his soul.

M.I. Publications in English
www.militia-immaculatae.org/english/

The Militia Immaculatæ is an army of Knights of Mary Immaculate which works for the conversion of all men to God, be they Protestants, or Jews, or Muslims, & in particular the Freemasons, and that all become saints, under the patronage and through the mediation of the Immaculate Virgin.

The Militia Immaculatæ was founded by St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe on the 16th of October 1917. Since 1937, Militia Immaculatæ is also called the Knights of the Immaculata.

Original Statutes of the Militia Immaculatæ (by St. Maximilian)

"She will crush your head." (Genesis 3:15)
"Thou alone hast vanquished all heresies throughout the world."
(from the Roman Breviary)

I. Goal of Membership:

To work for the conversion to God of all men, be they sinners, heretics, schismatics, Jews, Moslems etc., in particular the Freemasons; and that all become saints, under the patronage and through the mediation of the Immaculate Virgin.

II. Conditions of Membership:

1. To consecrate oneself entirely to the Immaculate Virgin, placing oneself freely as a docile and generous instrument in her hands.
2. To wear the Miraculous Medal.

III. Duties of Membership:

1. If possible, to pray the following ejaculatory prayer at least once a day: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee, and for all those who do not have recourse to thee, especially for the Freemasons and for those who are commended to thy care."
2. To use all other valid and legitimate means for the conversion and sanctification of men, according to one's means, in the different states and conditions of life, as the occasions present themselves; this is entrusted to the zeal and prudence of each one. Particularly recommended, however, is spreading the Miraculous Medal.

N.B. These means are recommended only as suggestions and not as an obligation; not one of them obliges under pain of sin, not even a venial sin. Our principal motive is to help the greatest possible number of souls to be united with the Sacred Heart of Jesus through the mediation of the Immaculata.

If you want to join us, please email: info@militia-immaculatae.org
and tell us which country you are from.

Masses for the M.I.

July — September 2026

We are pleased to announce that priests will offer in the year 2026
Holy Masses for the sanctification of the Knights
of the Militia Immaculatæ.

July 2nd — Visitation of BVM
(Fr. Dennis McDonald,
Fr. Andrew Cranshaw)

July 4th — First Saturday of the Month
(Fr. Lucas Weber, Fr. Andreas Jeindl)

August 1st — First Saturday of the Month
(Fr. Lucas Weber, Fr. Andreas Jeindl,
Fr. Stefan Frey)

August 2nd — Queen of Angels
(Fr. Dennis McDonald)

August 14th — Saint Maximilian Kolbe
(Fr. Dennis McDonald)

August 22nd — Immaculate Heart of Mary
(Fr. Timothy Pfeiffer)

September 5th — First Saturday of the Month
(Fr. Lucas Weber, Fr. Helmet Trutt,
Fr. Andreas Jeindl)

September 12th — Holy Name of Mary
(Fr. Dennis McDonald)

We offer sincere thanks to our benefactors, through whose help we are able to print and distribute good reading materials.

Please support the apostolate of the Militia Immaculatæ
www.militia-immaculatae.org/english/donations/

Donate