

C O N S E C R A T E Y O U R S E L F T O M A R Y

“To lead every individual with Mary to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.” - St. Maximilian Kolbe

WHAT IS TOTAL CONSECRATION TO MARY?

Consecration means setting yourself aside for service to God. The Church has always advocated consecrating yourself to Jesus Christ through the Blessed Virgin Mary, the perfect model of discipleship.

From the earliest known prayer to Mary, the *Sub Tuum Praesidium* to St. John Damascene to St. Louis de Montfort, devotion to Mary and the total consecration to her have ancient roots. In our times Pope John Paul II recommends an “act of entrustment to Mary (his papal motto is an enthusiastic *Totus Tuus*—“Totally Yours”). St. Maximilian Kolbe adds a strong missionary dimension to Marian Consecration.

Marian Consecration, therefore, is no archaic spirituality but is a living and active means of advancing the Faith as a People of God. It is not just another “devotion,” but is a complete spirituality, one not lightly undertaken.

In 1992 the Holy Father developed our understanding of this consecration even further. By dying for another and “consecrating his life to the Immaculate Virgin,” St. Maximilian has become, suggests the Holy Father, a “prophet and a sign of the new era, the civilization of love.” Here, John Paul is clearly endorsing the Kolbean example of Marian consecration as a critical element of his “new evangelization” for the third Christian millennium, and St. Maximilian as a primary intercessor.

WHAT IS THE MILITIA OF THE IMMACULATA?

The Militia of the Immaculata (MI) is a world-wide evangelization movement founded by St. Maximilian Kolbe in 1917. It encourages a total consecration to Mary Immaculate as a means of spiritual renewal for individuals and society. Marian consecration in the MI is a formal act of self-giving that does not stop at Mary, but is Christ-directed. It is really a consecration to Jesus. The MI motto is “To lead every individual with Mary to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.”

The MI employs prayer as the main weapon in the spiritual battle with evil. Members also immerse themselves in apostolic initiatives throughout society, either individually or in groups to deepen the knowledge of the Gospel and our Catholic Faith in themselves and in others.

By joining the MI, members become willing instruments of Our Lady, the handmaid of the Lord and the immaculate instrument of God. You become a member of an international movement sharing in the maternal mission of Mary, the conversion and sanctification of all souls. The goals of the MI are personal sanctification, the conversion of the world and ultimately the universal reign of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The MI is one of the few Vatican-approved public associations whose mission, like that of the Catholic Church, is universal. Although the MI is open to Catholics only, it encourages all people of good will to develop a trusting relationship with Our Lady.

WHY SHOULD I JOIN THE MI?

Consecrating yourself to Mary through the ideal of St. Maximilian will be one of the most important days of your life. You will be placing yourself under the mantle of Mary's protective care as the Immaculate Conception, Mother of the Church and Mediatrix of All Graces.

Through total consecration you cooperate with Mary in the work of building up and renewing the Church of the third millennium. She will enlighten your mind, guide your will, empower your efforts and intercede for you in a special way before the throne of the Father.

You will also share in the intercessory prayer so the MI religious communities, who pray daily for the success of the MI movement and the sanctification of its members.

Finally, you will have the support that comes from being a part of an international movement of spiritual renewal. You will have access to MI conferences and resource materials, to its regular magazine, *Immaculata*, and to regular mailings from the national office on how better to live out your consecration.

AM I READY TO CONSECRATE MYSELF TOTALLY TO MARY AND JOIN THE MI?

The spirit of the MI is the spirit of continual conversion. Not everyone who enrolls as a member understands perfectly in the beginning the power of this consecration. But when lived in the spirit of willingness and humility, the Immaculata will elevate our natural gifts and inspire us to holiness and fruitful service within the Church.

As Jesus said to those who would stand up and follow him: “Even greater things than these will you do.”

HOW DO I ENROLL IN THE MI?

A. Select the date on which you want your name recorded in the official register of the MI, preferably a Marian fast day.

You may enroll on-line at our website, <http://www.consecration.com/>

January 1	Solemnity of the Mother of God
February 11	Our Lady of Lourdes
March 25	Annunciation
May 13	Our Lady of Fatima
May 31	Visitation
June 27	Our Lady of Perpetual Help
July 16	Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
August 15	Assumption
August 22	Queenship of Mary
September 8	Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary
September 12	Solemnity of the Holy Name of Mary
September 15	Our Lady of Sorrows
October 7	Our Lady of the Rosary
November 21	Presentation of Mary
December 8	Immaculate Conception
December 12	Our Lady of Guadalupe

- B. Prepare yourself for the day of enrollment by daily Mass if possible, the Rosary, spiritual reading; and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation on or shortly before the day of your enrollment.
- C. On the day of your MI enrollment, recite the official act of consecration. Renounce all attachment to sin and if possible, attend Mass. In this way you will be making an effort to remove all obstacles to Our Lady making you her own in the Holy Spirit.
- D. Finally, ask Our Lady and St. Maximilian to show you how you can best serve the Lord from this moment on. "Membership in the MI means complete dedication to the Kingdom of God and to the salvation of souls through Mary Immaculate." - Pope John Paul II

WHO IS ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE?

St. Maximilian was born Raymond Kolbe in Poland, January 8, 1894. In 1910, he entered the Conventual Franciscan Order. He was sent to study in Rome where he was ordained a priest in 1918.

Father Maximilian returned to Poland in 1919 and began to spread the MI movement of Marian consecration which he founded on October 16, 1917. In 1927, he established an evangelization center near Warsaw called Niepokalanow – the "City of the Immaculata." By 1939, the City had expanded from eighteen friars to an incredible 650, making it the largest Catholic religious house in the world.

To better "win the world for the Immaculata," the friars utilized the most modern techniques. This enabled them to publish countless catechetical and devotional tracts, a daily newspaper with a circulation of 230,000 and a monthly magazine with a circulation of over one million. Maximilian used short-wave radio and planned to build a motion picture studio—he was a true "apostle of the mass media." He established a City of the Immaculata in Nagasaki, Japan, in 1930, and envisioned missionary centers worldwide.

Maximilian was a ground-breaking theologian. His insights on the Immaculate Conception anticipated the Marian theology of the Second Vatican Council and further developed the Church's understanding of Mary as the "Mediatrice" of all graces of the Trinity, and as "Advocate" for God's people.

In 1941, the Nazis imprisoned Father Maximilian in the Aushwitz death camp. There he offered his life for another prisoner and was condemned to slow death in a starvation bunker. On August 14, 1941, his impatient captors ended his life with a fatal injection. Pope John Paul II canonized Maximilian as a "martyr of charity" in 1982. St. Maximilian Kolbe is considered a patron of journalists, families, prisoners, the pro-life movement, the chemically addicted and those with eating disorders.

"Maximilian Kolbe is a prophet and a sign of the new era, the civilization of love." - Pope John Paul II

THE ORIGINAL CHARTER OF THE MI

I. Purpose of the Movement

Pursue the conversion of every person living in sin, heresy, schism and especially Freemasonry, and the growth in holiness of all persons, under the sponsorship of Mary Immaculate.

II. Conditions for Membership

1. Make a voluntary and total oblation of oneself to Mary Immaculate as an instrument in her most holy hands.
2. Carry or wear the Miraculous Medal.
3. Have one's name placed on the register of the Pious Union of Rome at the Primary Center or at some canonically

erected Affiliated Center.

III. Means of the Apostolate

1. Once a day, if possible, beseech the Immaculata with the ejaculation: "O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you, and for all who do not have recourse to you, especially for the Freemasons."
2. Use all the legitimate means that one's particular state in life, condition, and varying opportunities make possible, the choice of which is left to the zeal and prudence of each member, and especially, propagate the Miraculous Medal.

WEAR THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL

The Miraculous Medal owes its origins to the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the chapel of the Rue du Bac, Paris, in 1830. She appeared to Catherine Labouré, showing the young nun and future canonized saint the design of a medal that serves as a mini-catechism of the Church's teaching on Our Lady.

In a vision, Mary stood on a globe with brilliant light streaming from her jeweled fingers. "Behold the symbol of graces shed upon those who ask for them," she said, representing herself as Mediatrix of All Graces. Surrounding her a banner read, "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you," symbolizing her Immaculate Conception. The vision reversed, showing the letter "M" entwined with a cross above the Sacred Hearts. This image represents Mary as Co-redemptrix, a unique participator in Jesus's saving act of redemption.

Millions of medals have been distributed and untold graces given "to those who wear it around the neck" as the Virgin promised to St. Catherine. Hearing of the miraculous conversion of the agnostic Alphonse Ratisbonne through the medal, St. Maximilian made wearing it and giving it away an integral part of his movement. He called the Miraculous Medal "a 'bullet' with which the faithful soldier hits the enemy, that is evil, and thus rescues souls."

Those who join the MI movement receive a complimentary medal from the National Center along with a membership certificate.

DAILY MIRACULOUS MEDAL PRAYER

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

MI PRAYER OF MARIAN CONSECRATION (Composed by St. Maximilian Kolbe)

O Immaculata, Queen of Heaven and Earth, refuge of sinners and our most loving Mother, God has willed to entrust the entire order of mercy to you. I, (*name*) a repentant sinner, cast myself at your feet, humbly imploring you to take me, with all that I am and have, wholly to yourself as your possession and property. Please make of me, of all my powers of soul and body, of my whole life, death and eternity, whatever most pleases you.

If it pleases you, use all that I am and have without reserve, wholly to accomplish what was said of you: "She will crush your head," and "You alone have destroyed all heresies in the whole world." Let me be a fit instrument in your immaculate and merciful hands for introducing and increasing your glory to the maximum in all the many strayed and indifferent souls, and thus help extend as far as possible the blessed kingdom of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. For wherever you enter, you obtain the grace of conversion and growth in holiness since it is through your hands that all graces come to us from the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

V. Allow me to praise you, O Sacred Virgin.

R. Give me strength against your enemies.

GAINING A PLENARY INDULGENCE UPON JOINING THE MI

A plenary indulgence – the complete remission of temporal punishment in purgatory due to sin – is granted by the Church for enrollment in the MI. This great honor was bestowed on the Movement by Pope Pius XI in 1926.

To receive an indulgence, you must:

- Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation within the eight days preceding your enrollment,
- Attend Mass and receive Holy Communion on the day of your enrollment,
- Pray at least Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be for the intentions of the Holy Father, and
- Renounce all attachment to sin, even venial sin, on your enrollment date.