

## MI Monthly Formation (4)

### In Fr. Kolbe's Marian and Missionary Spirituality

Dear MI friends,

The **light of Easter** joy shines upon us and fills our hearts with feelings of beatitude, gratitude and peace. With good reason the Liturgy of the Church invites us pray: *“Rejoice, Mother of the Light: Jesus the sun of justice, overcoming the darkness of the tomb, sheds his radiance over the whole world, alleluia.”*<sup>1</sup> Yes, also during this Easter Season the **Blessed Virgin Mary** is actively present in our Christian journey. *“During the ‘great Sunday,’ the fifty-day period in which with joyful exultation the Church celebrates the paschal mystery, the Roman liturgy also commemorates the Mother of Christ as she was filled with joy because of the resurrection of her Son and as she devoted herself to prayer with the apostles in trusting expectation of the gift of the Holy Spirit (Cf. Acts 1: 14). When, in fulfillment of its maternal role, the Church celebrates the sacraments of Christian initiation – which are paschal sacraments – it acknowledges the Blessed Virgin as the model of this maternal role. The Church also accepts the mother of Christ as its exemplar and helper in the mission of proclaiming the gospel that Christ entrusted to it after his resurrection from the dead (Cf. Mt 28:19-20).”*<sup>2</sup> Mary, in fact, was the first to be evangelized<sup>3</sup> and the first evangelizer<sup>4</sup>, a fount of inspiration for all the baptized in order that we might know our commitment to spread the Good News: everywhere until the end of the world.

In **April** our spiritual goal is to make every effort to share our temporal and spiritual goods with our neighbors, especially with those who are in need. We have to be even more conscious about what we today are accustomed to call North-South contrast, the increasingly wealthier North, and the increasingly poorer South. We cannot remain indifferent or passive spectators to the reality that the resources of the whole world (natural, economical, cultural, etc.) are in the hands of 20% of the richest people of humanity *“who amassing to themselves the imperialistic monopoly of economic and political supremacy at the expense of others.”*<sup>5</sup> We ought to identify in our local area what situations of suffering, exclusion of basic rights and poverty exist, and we should try to understand what resources are available in our area to help those who are in need. Moreover, we know that poverty doesn't have only a material connotation but it is also a deprivation of freedom and of other human rights; it is every form of isolation or exclusion that many of our neighbors are still experiencing today.

As Christians and as people consecrated to Our Lady, following in the steps of St. Maximilian Kolbe, we all have the ability to bring about change, even if it is on a small scale. St. Maximilian's self-offering in the concentration camp, in order to save a father of a family, was not an isolated action, rather it was the coronation of his entire life trained in self-giving and the natural consequence of his priesthood and of his whole life spent under Mary's maternal gaze. During the Second World War, when Poland was invaded by Germany, Fr. Kolbe opened his Convent, the City of the Immaculata, to hundred of refugees, wounded, sick and hungry, many of whom were Jewish. He even welcomed injured German soldiers.

At first it is normal to feel powerless when we are confronted with human suffering and injustice. **What can we do** to combat unemployment, illness and malnutrition? Our feeling of helplessness sometimes turns into total confusion when evil and its consequences achieve huge, perhaps even global proportions. What can we do in the face of war and terrorism or the absurd violence in Palestine, in Africa, in many Asian Countries? And yet, our task should be to discover what we can do about it and what we can do to bear witness to Christ in today's society, so that we may become builders of the “civilization of love and truth”, as Fr. Kolbe was.

Easter Season is characterized by the presence of the Risen Son Who brings us His gifts of joy, peace and light. But it is also a time to remember that, filled with His grace, we too are called to be **“salt of the earth”** and **“light of the world.”** It is a time to remember what John Paul II wrote in his Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, to accompany all Christians on the new stage of the Church's life and of humanity: *“A new century, a new*

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<sup>1</sup> Entrance Antiphon, Mass in honor of “Holy Mary, Fountain of Light and Life”, in *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, Vol. 1, Catholic Book Publishing Co., New York, 1992

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, page 75

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Lk 1:26-38

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Lk 1:39-45

<sup>5</sup> John Paul II, homily in Edmonton, Canada, September 17, 1984.

millennium are opening in **the light of Christ**. But not everyone can see this light. Ours is the wonderful and demanding task of becoming its 'reflection'.'<sup>6</sup>

**"Yes, now is the time for mission!** – the Pope wrote to the youth of the world in preparation for the 17th World Youth Day that will be in Toronto, next July - ***In your Dioceses and parishes, in your movements, associations and communities, Christ is calling you... By contemplating the light radiant on the face of the Risen Christ, you will learn to live as 'children of the light and children of the day' (1 Thes 5:5), and in this way you will show that 'the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true.'***(Eph 5:9)"<sup>7</sup>

The papal message is not only for youth, but also for every believer who wishes to follow Christ more perfectly and for all who want to share their store of temporal and spiritual goods with those who are deprived of wealth, fellowship and support. One way of sharing that we certainly can and should do, is to pray for guidance in helping one another to discover and to fulfill their own vocation, especially to obtain the gift of many holy vocations to ordained ministry and consecrated life. More than ever this year, because in the context of the World Day of Prayer for Vocations that will take place **on April 21**, the Fourth Sunday of Easter, the Third Continental Congress for vocations in North America will be held. Each of us is invited to pray, so that this important gathering may produce a renewed commitment to foster vocations and to enkindle a more generous enthusiasm among the Christians.<sup>8</sup>

I also think that this commitment for vocations will be a fruitful way "to open wide our store of spiritual goods" to our brothers and sisters who are spiritually and morally poorer and needier. Following the example of Mary, "*the Star of Evangelization*," we will practice the greater love of placing ourselves closer to them with a profound sense of mercy and understanding, of patience and trust, of respect and objective appreciation of their worth. This could be the best way to "*live as children of light*."<sup>9</sup>



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## THE WAY OF HUMILITY

APRIL Prayer Intention:

**That we may open wide our store of temporal and spiritual goods to those who are deprived of wealth, fellowship and support**

**The poor: not only those who are lacking food,  
but also those who are deprived of freedom and other human rights**

**Aim: to grow in becoming "salt of the earth" and "light of the world," truly witnesses of Christ's love and truth**

Begin the meeting with prayer in your customary way. The suggested reading for this month is from the holy Gospel according to

### **Matthew 5: 13-16**

**“Y**ou are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lamp stand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”

<sup>6</sup> John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, N. 54

<sup>7</sup> John Paul II, Message to the Youth of the World, July 25, 2001, N. 4

<sup>8</sup> See the Message of the Holy Father for the 39<sup>th</sup> World Day of Prayer for Vocations, "*The vocation to holiness*"

<sup>9</sup> Eph 5:8-10

As we suggested last time, contemplating on the Word of God, following the method illustrated for January and February, would be very helpful. See it in the box reported in these two months' formation.

## Hints for contemplation<sup>1</sup>

# *"You are the salt of the earth" - "You are the Light of the World."* Through Baptism our whole being has been profoundly changed, because it has been "seasoned" with the new life which comes from Christ (cf. Rom 6:4). The salt which keeps our Christian identity intact even in a very secularized world is the grace of Baptism. Therefore, one who lives according to the will of God and practices the precepts of the Lord shines like a light for the world. The deed or penance or prayer pleasing to God is to go out of ourselves, to reach out toward others. We will be a light for others by participating in the works of mercy and by testifying to the values of our faith openly. To reveal to the world the Light which is Christ, is the mission of the disciples

The passage from the Gospel on which we are reflecting is directly related to the Beatitudes, and should be interpreted without separating it from them, particularly from the last Beatitude, which refers to persecution: *"Blessed are those persecuted for holiness' sake; the reign of God is theirs. Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of slander against you because of me."* (Mt 5:10-11) It is the description of how the Christian community can be faithful to the Beatitudes even in time of difficulty, opposition or rejection. To further explain the passage, Jesus used the symbols of the salt, the light, the city, and the oil lamp.

# *"You are the salt of the earth."* Salt, in a sense, symbolizes what gives flavor to food. It is also a source of preventing corruption; added to manure for the fields, it acts as a fertilizer, and it may also be considered a sign of wisdom. In the past, people used a mixture of animal dung and very coarse salt to heat an oven. This kind of salt was a catalyst that allowed the heating mixture to burn. But after a certain time, the salt would lose this property and would no longer be of any value. Which of these meanings did Christ have in mind? Each meaning refers to a single ingredient which acts as a chemical agent that helps to start a fire; as a condiment for conservation; an ingredient which in large measure serves to revive, fertilize, vitalize or to improve taste.

Jesus invites us to give, as salt does, a special flavor to the world, and to transform it from within. That means to show clearly that our way of living and

thinking as Christians is different from that of our contemporaries.<sup>10</sup> As the salt of the earth, we are called to preserve the faith which we have received and to pass it on intact to others. To be able to do that, we ought to discover our Christian roots, learn about the Church's history, deepen our knowledge of the spiritual heritage which has been passed on to us, follow in the footsteps of the witnesses who have gone before us. *"Only by staying faithful to God's commandments, to the Covenant which Christ sealed with his blood poured out on the Cross, will you be the apostles and witnesses of the new millennium."*<sup>11</sup> In fact, a serious threat follows in Jesus' address: *"But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot."* The disciples are irreplaceable for the world. The emphasis is not placed on this point but rather on the possibility of their being unsuccessful. The appeal is directed to the disciples: they are either the salt, or are trampled underfoot. There is no middle road.

# *"You are the light of the world."* Without light there is no life. Without disciples, the world is in darkness, it is total absurdity. As the sun is to the earth, so the disciples are those who bring sense to the world. The image of light evokes the desire for truth and the thirst for the fullness of knowledge which are imprinted deep within every man and woman. The light which Jesus speaks of in the Gospel is the light of faith, God's free gift, which stirs the heart and enlightens the mind. Jesus explains His identity and mission: *"I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."* (Jn 8:12) Faith is a personal decision which involves our whole life. *"Our personal encounter with Christ bathes life in new light, sets us on the right path, and sends us out to be his witnesses. This new way of looking at the world and at people, which comes to us from him, leads us more deeply into the mystery of faith, which is not just a collection of theoretical assertions to be accepted and approved by the mind,*

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. Rom 12:2

<sup>11</sup> John Paul II, Message for the World Youth Day, N. 2

*but an experience to be had, a truth to be lived, the salt and light of all reality.*"<sup>12</sup>

# "A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden." The image of a city set on a hill symbolizes the visibility and the strength of the community of disciples. The disciples' work for good or evil, is a blessing or a curse. Their work is very visible to the world and to history. Our commitment to holiness gives full meaning to life and makes it reflect God's glory. We can draw strength from the sacramental grace of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. And if we establish the habit of visiting the Lord and speaking with Him "heart to heart" in Eucharistic Adoration, day-by-day, we will receive new energy to bring comfort to the suffering and peace to the world. Many people are wounded by life: they are excluded from economic progress, are homeless or without a family or a job. There are people who are lost in a world of false illusions or who have abandoned all hope. **By contemplating the light radiant on the face of the Risen Christ, we will learn to live as "children of the light and children of the day."** (1Thes 5:5)

People don't "light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lamp stand, where it gives light to all in the house." The first half of this sentence expresses a negative reality. What sense does a lamp make under a bushel basket?<sup>13</sup> It doesn't make sense to light a lamp and then cover it. Light is given to the disciples in order to let it shine.

# "Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father." The images of the light and the salt focus on this last quotation which becomes the most authoritative key to the interpretation of the whole excerpt. The end purpose of the disciples' testimony is to render glory to the Father in a filial life which imitates the perfection of the Father as it is indicated at the end of the Sermon on the Mount.

But **what are the good deeds which hold such importance and define the real disciples?** For the Hebrews not all the works of the Law are called "good", but only those which specifically regard alms, prayer and charity. For Luther, good works are preaching and faith. For him those who preach the gospel correctly, shall be the light of the world.

Regarding these more or less legitimate interpretations, we might ask: "What are the good deeds which make the disciples the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the city on the hill, the light on the lamp stand?"

**The Beatitudes are the good deeds** which Jesus has in mind. In the gospel of Matthew the Beatitudes become the works described as *the justice of the Kingdom* through a series of commands (do not kill, avoid all injury to your neighbor, avoid anger and verbal offenses...). These deeds are profound meekness of heart, matrimonial fidelity, sincerity in speech, docility, forgiving your enemy and the capacity to build up community.

They are **the good deeds** to which Jesus refers at the end of Matthew's gospel: "*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you*" (28:20).

**Good deeds are**, in a way, the first mission and a contribution to the building up of a pluralistic society which is in need of lofty evangelical values. Charity should always be carried out with discretion, in secret and in the silence of our heart, without worrying about the judgment of others.<sup>14</sup> **Good deeds are** the striving for meekness, humility, pardon, peace making, joy in persecution - to attain the fullness of life of the disciples in their ability to endure all persecution.

Above all else, **it is in adverse situations that the disciple** by his patient, humble, courageous and coherent conduct, **is a light to the world.**

Naturally one must also practice almsgiving, prayer and fasting; nevertheless, these three exterior actions are subordinate to silence and secrecy<sup>15</sup> while meekness, patience, humility and forgiveness must "*shine before men so that they may see goodness in [our] acts and give praise to [our] heavenly Father.*"<sup>16</sup>

**The dynamism of the Sermon on the Mount, therefore, evolves from the interior values to public testimony.** The fruit of good deeds is something interior but it is not destined to remain hidden because if it is real, it will inevitably radiate goodness, resulting in true and authentic social relationship.

Using the images of light and salt, Jesus invites us to make Him present in the world. The light is the primordial source of life which comes from God. Light

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., N. 3

<sup>13</sup> A bushel basket is a measure, a small container which holds four pecks and is used to weigh wheat or barley.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Mt 6: 5-18

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Mt 6:1+

<sup>16</sup> Mt 5:16

is the first creation God made in the beginning of all creation and it is essential for its continuance.<sup>17</sup> The sun is the source which illuminates, warms, energizes for growth, transforms and completes the vital cycle of every created thing.

# *"You are the light of the world."* This is a flattering statement, but to be true for us, it should include other evangelical qualities like: pureness of heart, fear of the Lord, humility, mercy, faith and a generous charity. Even the image of "salt" is effective. By its chemical character, it preserves, gives taste and maintains substance: these qualities are irreplaceable. Without salt, food would lose its special goodness. Whatever the food, without salt it has no flavor at all; it will be rejected. Through the beneficial action of salt, a substance is biologically conserved, does not decompose; it is preserved; maintaining the original and nutritive properties.

The essential deed of a Christian is maintaining the vitality of the community, living a life according to the Beatitudes. The believer is like a dose of salt which makes all the dough good and tasty. It is the pleasant taste of brotherly living in support of one another and in the reciprocal exchange of the gifts of God.

Jesus will gather us into His kingdom only if we strive to live His word, internally renewing ourselves, so that we do not debase our existence in senseless and insignificant situations. We are the salt and light of the world. It is a very beautiful vocation!

# *The Cross, the Beacon of Life.* The Cross gives life to the Pascal Candle, light which shone in the darkest day of the world and continues to enlighten every believer. It is the day in which death no longer exists because from Calvary this luminous font burst forth infusing and enlightening everything even to the end of the world. The Cross, tree and beacon of life, has overcome the darkness of evil and by doing so has caused a new light to blaze in the sky, the Easter of Christ Who is born again in the heart of every baptized person. In the Church all other light comes from the Pascal Candle, from every child born in the faith of Christ, to every believer who dies in the hope of living forever in His Reign of Light. *This is the light which conquered death - glory to God forever!*

We believers are the "light" which shines forth, the divine light, like the stars which receive

their light from their Creator and which illuminate the night. Faith is the light which God entrusts to us at the beginning of our journey and invites us to keep it lit until the end of our lives.

# *The Testimony of the "City of God."* The believer is the one who walks before the Lord and keeps pace according to His laws. There is no danger when you walk with an expert guide, even if the route is difficult. The Christian is the one who, from the day of his baptism, begins the walk of faith to reach the City of God; the Kingdom which is not of this world.

Every teaching of Christ is illustrated with wise images which indicate the importance of man's behavior. He must live the laws of God with wisdom and clarity, in such a way that his life becomes a believable testimony of the love of the Father. Light is a symbol of an active life - one of freshness, freedom and clarity. This is what our Christian life should be: a witness which gives credibility and a gratuitous, honest behavior that reveals that the message of God lives in us. It is the light which illumines, the salt which gives flavor and joy to living.

# *"You are the salt of the earth - You are the light of the world."* These two images are amazing. To be a witness to God in the world is the duty of every Christian. *"But if salt loses its taste...Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket."* Unfortunately, perhaps, this is a little of what happens to all of us, today more so than in other times. Because we know, only the saints are truly *"salt of the earth and light of the world"*. But, even so, we are all called, at least a little, to be saints, living with faith according to the word of Jesus in our daily lives. We all can do that with God's help, especially in asking the intercession of the **Blessed Virgin Mary**, our Mother in order of grace. She is the *"handmaid of the Lord"* left by Her Son as Mother in the midst of the infant Church: *"Behold your Mother."*<sup>18</sup> Thus there began to develop a special bond between this Mother and the Church. After Her Son's departure, Her motherhood remains in the Church as maternal mediation: interceding for all Her children, the Mother cooperates in the saving work of Her Son, the Redeemer of the world. For this reason the Church unceasingly expresses her faith in this truth by invoking Mary *"under the titles of Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Adjutrix and Mediatrix."*<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Gn 1:3-4

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<sup>18</sup> Jn 19: 27

<sup>19</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, N. 62

*O Mother of Light, Who brought forth Christ, the light of the world, help us to become truly disciples of your Risen Son. May the Gospel be the measure and guide of our life's decision and plans. So that we may be missionaries in all that we do and say, and wherever we work and live we may be signs of God's love, credible witnesses to the loving presence of Jesus Christ. Amen!*

### Texts for further reflection

Is 58:7-10 Ps 112:1 Mt 5; Jn 9:1-41  
 1Cor 1:16 - 2:15; Phlm 2; 1 Pt 2:21-25  
 CCC 782, 873-875, 898  
 SK 1217; 1264<sup>20</sup> SK 892<sup>21</sup>

### Abbreviations

NMI John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, Apostolic Letter, 01/06/2001  
 CCC *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 10/11/1992  
 MI-GS MI General Statutes, MI International Center, Roma, 10/16/1997  
 LG Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, November 21, 1964  
 SK Scritti Kolbe, Fr. Kolbe's writings.  
 See: "*Stronger than Hatred*", New City Press, NY, 1991. Or: "*The Kolbe Reader*", Marytown Press, Libertyville, IL, 1987

### For Personal Reflection

- What resources are there in your area to help those in need?
- Can you think of ways to take concrete action to overcome poverty, isolation or exclusion? What are they?
- What can you do in order to assure each man a life in keeping with his dignity?
- In which ways can you be "light" and "salt" in your family, your workplace, your community?
- How often do you go to Mary for Her help and intercession?

<sup>20</sup> "*Stronger than Hatred*", New City Press, New York, 1991, pages 108-110.

<sup>21</sup> "*The Kolbe Reader*", Marytown Press, Libertyville, IL, pages 175-178

### Apply it

- Opting for the poor by giving your time, your care, your affection.
- Performing small tasks, such as painting, cleaning, fixing, shopping, etc., for some relative or neighbor who can't afford such services.
- Teaching language skills to an immigrant.
- Opting for the poor by being present to them: visit prisoners; take time to speak to someone who needs consolation.
- Opting for the poor by sharing your possessions: helping students who need books, supplies, etc.; or assisting families in need of food, clothes, health care, etc.

### From MI General Statutes

**Art. 8** Since the giving of oneself to the Immaculate is not a transitory act, but a responsible and dynamic acceptance of the state of conformation to Her, in order to grow in the spirit of faith and service, it is necessary that militia members be adequately formed according to the ideals of the Association and in the apostolic style that characterizes it. Therefore, members strive to deepen their own spiritual, theological, mariological and pastoral formation, drawing on the richness of the Church's magisterium as well as the various initiatives presented by the Association.

**Art. 9** The members of the M.I. love the Church, Mother and Teacher, and offer themselves as a living and effective presence for contributing to the growth of the ecclesial community.

### A Flower for Our Lady

Would you like to create a new prayer of consecration to Our Lady? Did you ever think of writing your personal prayer of consecration to Our Lady? If you have one or if you want to compose one, it would be very fruitful to share it with others. Then, if you would like to do this, please send us by e-mail (FKMinCAL@aol.com) the text of your prayer of consecration - anonymously, if you wish. We will include it in the next or later issue of the MI Monthly Formation. For publication, the prayer should be concise and pertain to the principal ideas concerning the consecration to Our Lady according to Saint Maximilian Kolbe.

It would be a beautiful bouquet of flowers that we offer to the Blessed Virgin: what do you think?

## St. Maximilian Kolbe's Writings

*"All our sufferings, deeds, thoughts, words, actions, life, death, eternity and all of us are always the irrevocable possessions (what a delight!) of the Immaculate Queen of heaven and earth. So even when we are not thinking of it (as we like to reflect on it) she directs every one of our actions, prearranges all the circumstances, repairs the damage from our falls and leads us lovingly toward heaven, and through us she is pleased to implant good ideas, sentiments and examples everywhere in order to save souls and lead them to the good Jesus.(...)*

*We also through our consecration to her are instruments of God's mercy in her Immaculate hands as she is an instrument (of his mercy) in God's hands. Obedience is God's will; and for us it is God's will by means of the Immaculate, that is, it is the merciful God's will.*

*Let's allow ourselves to be led; let us be peaceful, peaceful and not aspire to do more than she wants or faster than she wants. Let's allow ourselves to be carried by her; she will think of everything; she will provide for all our spiritual and bodily needs. Let's offer her all our difficulties and discomforts, trusting that she will take better care of us than we can. Hence, peace, peace, much peace in boundless confidence in her. The M.I. is not all our doing, and we neither know how nor are we able to make it go forward. If it is our Mom's thing, then difficulties will only strengthen it; but if not, then let it fall like anything else. (...)*

*Let's be occupied, but not preoccupied. It is necessary that hardships and obstacles, both external and internal, failures, listlessness, fatigue, derision, reverses and other crosses purify and toughen us. We must have much patience with ourselves and even with our good God who tests us out of love." (SK 56)*

### Prayer for vocations, 2002

*"Holy Father, look upon this humanity of ours, that is taking its first steps along the path of the Third Millennium. Its life is still deeply marked by hatred, violence and oppression, but the thirst of justice, truth and grace still finds a space in the hearts of many people, who are waiting for someone to bring salvation, enacted by You through Your Son Jesus. There is the need for courageous heralds of the Gospel, for generous servants of suffering humanity. Send holy priests to Your Church, we pray, who may sanctify Your people with the tools of Your grace. Send numerous consecrated men and women, that they may show Your holiness in the midst of the world. Send holy laborers into Your vineyard, that they may labor with the fervor of charity and, moved by Your Holy Spirit, may bring the salvation of Christ to the farthest ends of the Earth. Amen*

John Paul II, September 8, 2001

### Dates to Remember

- 7 **Divine Mercy Sunday.** Devotion to the Divine Mercy was promoted by Sister Faustina Kowalska, canonized by Pope John Paul II April 30, 2000
- 8 **The Annunciation of the Lord. Solemnity. Plenary Indulgence for MI Member.** "During the eight octave days of Easter the Gospels continually present to us encounters with the risen Christ. This transposed solemnity can also be interpreted within the context of divine-human encounter. What an encounter with God through the angel Gabriel Mary had: "the power of the Most High will overshadow you" ... and She's pregnant with Jesus! .... This life nurtured in darkness bursts forth to be the Light of the world. This Life entombed in Mary's womb becomes the risen Lord." (Living Liturgy, *Annunciation of the Lord*, 2002)
- 21 **39th World Day of Prayer for Vocations and Third Continental Congress for Vocations in Montreal, Canada**<sup>22</sup>
- 28 In 1918 Fr. Kolbe was ordained a Priest.

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<sup>22</sup> See the Message of the Holy Father on the Vatican web site: [www.vatican.va/holy\\_father.com](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father.com)