

MI Monthly Formation (10)

In Fr. Kolbe's Marian and Missionary Spirituality

OCTOBER 2004 PRAYER INTENTION:

That we feel the duty and the joy of participating in the mission of the Church to announce to all peoples the Christ, the only Savior of the world.

Dear Friends,

This month is especially dedicated to reflecting on and to promoting the Lord's missionary mandate: "*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; and Lo, I am with you always, until the close of the ages*" (Mt 28: 19-20).

The ultimate purpose of mission is none other than to make men share in the communion between the Father and the Son in their Spirit of love.¹ Indeed, God "*desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth*" (1 Tim 2: 4). Please, note the passive voice of the verb: it indicates that no one can ever save himself. Salvation comes only from God in Jesus Christ and through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier. Even those who do not know Jesus or belong to other Religions are saved by Christ and in His sacrifice, if they don't reject Him on purpose.

How great and lovingly is our God!

"Those who obey the prompting of the Spirit of truth are already on the way of salvation. But the Church, to whom this truth has been entrusted, must go out to meet their desire, so as to bring them the truth. Because she believes in God's universal plan of salvation, the Church must be missionary."²

When we say "the Church" we clearly mean every single baptized person. Each one of us who has received the grace to meet Jesus, to know Him and to follow Him has the duty to share the

Good News with others and to pass on his faith to the next generation.

Our Movement and its spirituality are particularly devoted to this fundamental mission. In this month, it will be helpful to reread the articles 10-18 of the MI General Statutes and draw from them new ideas and strength for living out our consecration to the Immaculata and bear much fruit.

O Mary, Mother of the Church, through the intercession of St. Maximilian, grant that I might fully collaborate with you and the Holy Spirit as an instrument for the building up of Christ's Church in the world. Amen.

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As usual, for your personal or group formation as MIers, I recommend to use the articles that are published in *Immaculata* magazine. As you know, this year many articles develop different aspects of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary and the meaning of this grace here and now. The National center has also prepared a brochure on this subject that is very useful for a wider sowing of this truth so that, as Fr. Kolbe wished, *the Immaculata would as soon as possible become Queen of the whole world and of each and every soul.*³

Suggested Readings for the Month

¹ See John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 21.

² CCC 851

³ In *Maria Was His Middle Name*, p. 140.

John Paul II, *Message for the World Mission Sunday 2004, "Eucharist and Mission,"* that you can download from the Vatican web site: www.Vatican.va/Holy_Father/John_Paul_II/messages; or www.Vatican.va/latest.

John Paul II, *The Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People (Christifideles Laici)*, 12/30/1988, chapter III, nn. 32-44.

John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte (At the Beginning of the New Millennium)*, 1/6/2001, **nn. 54-56**.

SK, *Scritti Kolbe (Fr. Kolbe's writings)*, in *Stronger than Hatred*, New City Press, New York, 1991. Or in : *The Kolbe Reader*, Marytown Press, Libertyville, IL, 1987. Or in: *Maria Was His Middle Name*, The Benziger Sisters Publishers, Altadena, CA, 1977.

For those who prefer John Paul II's reflections, I suggest meditating upon his general audience of January 8, 1997, *Christ Calls Women to Share His Mission*, that you can find in *Theotókos, Woman, Mother, Disciple*, a collection of the Pope's Catechesis on Mary, Mother of God, edited by Pauline Books & Media, Boston, 2000, pp. 161-164.

Dates to Remember

- 1 *Thérèse of the Child Jesus*, virgin and doctor of the Church.
- 2 *Guardian Angels*. First Saturday of the month.
- 4 **St. Francis of Assisi**. Solemnity.
- 7 **Our Lady of the Rosary**.
- 10 22nd Anniversary of St. Maximilian's canonization.
- 16 *St. Margaret Mary Alacoque*, virgin. 87th Anniversary of the foundation of the MI. Plenary Indulgence for MIers.
- 24 **World Mission Sunday**.

For Personal Reflection

* Are we persuaded as baptized people that we must proclaim Christ as the Savior of the world?

* How much does the witness of the Blessed Virgin, St. Maximilian and of many other Saints encourage us to share our faith and to invite all to come closer to God?

* What kind of missionary work may we do in our area that we have not yet done?

* How much and by which means do we support missionaries who are giving their lives in foreign countries?