

Reflection Monday Week 19 St Maximilian Kolbe 2023

St Maximilian Kolbe was born on 8th January 1894 in occupied Poland: he joined the Franciscans in Lwów in 1910, and was ordained eight years later, as his country became free and independent for the first time in over 120 years. He believed the world was passing through an intense spiritual crisis, and that Christians must fight for the world's salvation with all the means possible. He founded a newspaper and the sodality of the Knights of Mary Immaculate. In 1927 he founded a community, "city of Mary," at Teresin: centred round the Franciscan friary; it attracted many lay people and became self-supporting, publishing periodicals and running a radio station. In 1930 he went to Japan, studied Buddhism and Shintoism. The Japanese edition of his newspaper spread the Christian message in harmony with Japanese culture. In Nagasaki, he set up a "Garden of the Immaculate," which survived the atomic bomb. He travelled to Malabar and Moscow, but was recalled to Poland in 1936 for health reasons. When the Germans invaded in 1939, the community at Teresin sheltered thousands of refugees, mostly Jews. In 1941 he was arrested and sent to Auschwitz, where he helped and succoured the inmates. In August a prisoner escaped, and in reprisal the authorities chose ten people to die by starvation. One of the men had a family, and Maximilian Kolbe took his place and spent his last days comforting his fellow prisoners. The man he saved was present at his canonization. What is important is that he acted the way he did because of who he was – or, rather, because of who he had become.

Quotes:

- The most deadly poison of our time is indifference.
- Prayer is powerful beyond limits when we turn to the Mary Immaculate who is queen even of God's heart.
- Jesus honoured Mary before all ages, and will honour her for all ages. No one comes to Him, nor even near Him, no one is saved or sanctified, if he too will not honour Mary. This is the lot of Angels and of men.

11 people were hanging on a rope, under a helicopter.

10 men and 1 woman

The rope was not strong enough to carry them all. So one had to leave otherwise they would all lose their lives.

They weren't able to choose that person, until the woman gave a very touching speech.

She said she would voluntarily let go of the rope, because as a woman, she was used to giving up everything for her husband and kids or for men in general, and was used to always making sacrifices with little in return.

As soon as she finished her speech, all the men started clapping...