



"The most deadly poison of our times is indifference."



St Maximilian Kolbe

SAINT & MARTYR OF AUSCHWITZ

"No one in the world can change Truth. What we can do and should do is to seek truth and to serve it when we have found it. The real conflict is the inner conflict. Beyond armies of occupation and the hetacombs of extermination camps, there are two irreconcilable enemies in the depth of every soul: good and evil, sin and love. And what use are the victories on the battlefield if we are ourselves defeated in our innermost personal selves?"

JCR: LD 18 / 22 / 28 / 29 / CBAT
SENIOR RE NON-EXAM: A1 / A3 / B2 / B2 / H1 / H2

WHAT WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO DO FOR A FRIEND?



- Give them your last Rolo?
- Give up your free time helping them study for a test?
- Give up social media for them?
- Donate blood or an organ for them?
- Give up your life to save them?

NOW APPLY THE SAME QUESTIONS TO A COMPLETE STRANGER



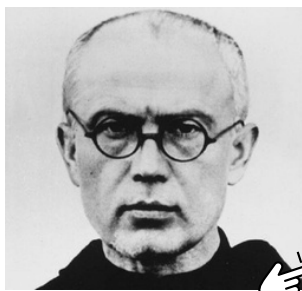
- Give them your last Rolo?
- Give up your free time helping them study for a test?
- Give up social media for them?
- Donate blood or an organ for them?
- Give up your life to save them?

THE HOLOCAUST



What do you know about Auschwitz Concentration Camp and the Holocaust? Maybe you've studied World War II in History class, or read John Boyne's "The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas" or Morris Gleitzman's "Once"? Maybe you've seen movies like "Schindler's List"? What were conditions like in these camps? _____

In the face of of such horror and brutality, evil and cruelty, many people lost hope. Others turned on each other in a desperate effort to survive. All had their dignity stripped from them in the most savage ways possible. How do you think some people were able to mentally and psychologically survive the horrors they experienced before the camps were liberated? _____



In the midst of such evil and torment, some were still able to perform incredible acts of selflessness and love. St Maximilian Kolbe is one such individual. His self-sacrificial love and compassion despite being surrounded by hate is an inspiration. **Saint Maximilian Kolbe is without a doubt, a Game-Changer.**

Click here and see what you can first guess out about his life from this painting.

Fr Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish Franciscan friar, was imprisoned in Auschwitz Concentration Camp and died there in a starvation bunker in 1941, famously offering his own life to save a stranger. This decision was no surprise given the type of life and priesthood Fr Maximilian had lived previously. He gave completely of himself tirelessly for Jesus, Mary and for others, despite illness and persecution. At Auschwitz, he sacrificed himself daily for his fellow prisoners, and was so filled with love that even the SS Guards found it difficult to look him in the eye.

NOW WATCH BOBBY ANGEL: ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE (ASCENSION PRESENTS)



What is your initial response to the life and death of Maximilian Kolbe in Auschwitz? _____

Did you know that as a child, Raymond Kolbe was unruly and wild? His mother once said to him in despair: "What will become of you?" This struck Raymond to the core, and he turned to Our Lady for guidance. It was after this that he had the vision of Our Lady and the crowns!

- ASCEND YOUTH MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -



1. Where was St Maximilian Kolbe born?
2. What was his name originally?
3. In his vision of Our Lady offering him two crowns, what colour were they and what did they represent?
4. What disease of the lungs seriously affected St Maximilian's health?
5. What religious order did St Maximilian belong to?
6. What did St Maximilian use a huge printing press for?
7. What is significant about the number 16670?
8. What concentration camp was St Maximilian led to?
9. Why did many of the camp guards find it difficult to look this physically weakened Polish priest in the eye?
10. Explain the events that led to St Maximilian's death in a starvation bunker?
11. St Maximilian died on the 14th August. This was the eve of which great Catholic solemnity?
12. St Maximilian had a tremendous devotion to Mary. He said we should never be afraid of loving Mary too much because we can never love her more than whom?

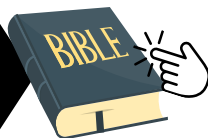


DID YOU KNOW?

- As a teenager, St Maximilian was torn between a desire to be a priest and a soldier. He had a huge interest in the military, and actually sketched plans for airplanes and war-craft. Instead, he dedicated himself to spiritual warfare and began the Militia of the Immaculata. **Why do you think he called the *Miraculous Medals* he would distribute "bullets"?**
- St Maximilian Kolbe established a friary with a printing press near Warsaw which eventually grew to a full-scale evangelisation operation, called *Niepokalanow* (the "City of the Immaculata"). By 1938, it had expanded from 18 friars to 650, the largest religious house in the world! The friars produced a monthly magazine with a circulation of over one million to counter the messages of the Nazi-Regime, a daily newspaper with a circulation of over 230,000 and other religious tracts using the latest printing technologies. He also started a radio station and planned to build a movie studio. His continuous and relentless dissemination of Catholic and anti-Nazi material resulted in his capture by the SS.
- St Maximilian also established **a monastery in Nagasaki**, Japan, stubbornly advising an unusual location on the outskirts of the city. The location of the monastery later ensured its survival when the atomic bomb was dropped in 1945. **Do you think this was merely coincidence?**
- The Catholic Church venerates him as the patron saint of amateur-radio operators, drug addicts, political prisoners, families, journalists, and prisoners. **Why do you think Maximilian was chosen as patron for each of these?**



LOOK UP JOHN 15:13 - HOW DOES THIS QUOTE RELATE TO THE LIFE OF MAXIMILIAN KOLBE?





Prisoner's Prayer to Saint Maximilian Kolbe

Sometimes we can feel imprisoned by life too, by the choices we have made, the situations we find ourselves unable to change, the way that others treat us. We can pray this prayer too!

St Maximilian Kolbe, introduce me to Mary, the Immaculata, Mother of God. She prayed for Jesus in a Jerusalem jail. She prayed for you in a Nazi prison camp. Ask her to comfort me in my confinement. May she teach me always to be good. If I am lonely, may she say, "God is here." If I feel hate, may she say, "God is love." If I am tempted, may she say, "God is pure." If I sin, may she say, "God is mercy." If I am in darkness, may she say, "God is light." If I am unjustly condemned, may she say, "God is truth." If I have pain in soul or body, may she say, "God is peace." If I lose hope, may she say: "God is with you all days, and so am I." Amen!

YOU CAN BE A GAME-CHANGER LIKE ST MAXIMILIAN!

- Ask God for the grace and desire to put others before yourself!
- Wear a Miraculous Medal around your neck.
- How would St Maximilian use social media today? Post a bible or saint quote or good video. You'll never know the effect it could have!
- Ask Our Lady to guide your future, like young Raymond did.
- Research what happened to Franciszek Gajowniczek, prisoner of Auschwitz.



Game-Changer Playlist!

Listen to and think about how they reflect the life and witness of Maximilian Kolbe. Click the titles.

- "Christ is Enough" (Hillsong United)
- "I believe in love" (Barlow Girl)
- "Until the Whole World Hears" (Casting Crowns)
- "While I'm Waiting" (John Waller)
- "The Battle Belongs to You" (Phil Wickham)