

August 14, 2025

Daily Reflections



NEVERENDING FORGIVENESS

By Sister Jane DeLisle, CSJ

An Excerpt from Today's Gospel

*Peter approached Jesus and asked him,
“Lord, if my brother sins against me,
how often must I forgive him?
As many as seven times?”
Jesus answered,
“I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times.”*

MATTHEW 18:21-22

Reflection

Today the Church celebrates the life of Maximillian Kolbe, priest and martyr. I first learned of him in 1986 when visiting our sisters in Lubbock, Texas. As I scanned the books in the convent, my eye fell on a small, thin book bearing his

name. The book was attractive due to its size. I thought I could easily finish reading it in the short time I was visiting.

Since I had been a Modern European History major in college, I found it a fascinating read. This short read has had a lasting effect on my life and ministry. Maximilian Kolbe gave me a profound insight into today's gospel urging me to forgive in endless measure.

St. Maximilian Kolbe was born as Raymund Kolbe on January 8, 1894, in the Kingdom of Poland, part of the Russian Empire. He was a Polish Conventual Franciscan friar and a martyr in the German death camp Auschwitz during World War II.

St. Maximilian Kolbe was very active in promoting the Immaculate Virgin Mary and is known as the Apostle of Consecration to Mary. Much of his life was strongly influenced by a vision he had of the Virgin Mary when he was twelve years old.

"That night I asked the Mother of God what was to become of me. Then she came to me holding two crowns, one white, the other red. She asked me if I was willing to accept either of these crowns. The white one meant that I should persevere in purity, and the red that I should become a martyr. I said that I would accept them both."

As a Franciscan priest he promoted devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, printing articles and devotional prayers. Kolbe also founded monasteries in both Japan and India. To this day, the Japanese monastery remains prominent in the Roman Catholic Church in Japan. Ill health forced him to return home to Poland as WWII was starting.

He was arrested for his anti-Nazi flyers but released after three months. Later, as the only Franciscan to remain in his town, he continued to work in his monastery, providing shelter for refugees -- including hiding 2,000 Jews from German persecution. On February 17, 1941 the monastery was shut down, he was arrested and imprisoned locally, and shortly thereafter, sent to Auschwitz. *"Never abandoning his priesthood, Kolbe was the victim of severe violence and harassment. Toward the end of his second month in Auschwitz, men were chosen to face death by starvation to warn against escapes. Kolbe was not chosen but volunteered to take the place of a man with a family."*

"It is said during the last days of his life Kolbe led prayers to Our Lady with the prisoners and remained calm. He was the last of the group to remain alive, after two weeks of dehydration and starvation. The guards gave him a lethal injection of carbolic acid. The stories tell that he raised his left arm and

calmly awaited death.” (Encyclopedia Britannica)

St. Maximilian Kolbe died on August 14 and his remains were cremated on August 15, the same day as the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary.

For me, Maximilian Kolbe gives witness to the unconditional love of God, living as Jesus -- giving his life for the sake of a man with a family -- and the courage to forgive “seven times seventy times.” His life as priest and martyr shine forth with the unconditional, all-pervading love poured out for the other, not counting the cost.





Prayer is powerful beyond limits

"St Maximilian Kolbe" by Lawrence OP is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/?ref=openverse>.

For Pondering

Ask yourself:

- What is my experience of forgiveness and being forgiven?
 - What is the cost for me to forgive “seven times seventy-seven times?”
 - Who inspires me by their faith and bold integrity?
 - How are my faith and ability to forgive sustained in these dangerous times?
-

For Prayer

*Gracious and loving God,
you ask me to forgive as you forgive.
Too often forgiving is difficult.
Teach me your ways of self-emptying love toward every kind of neighbor.
Please help me accept your great love for me,
that I may generously give of myself in service,
in forgiving myself and others.
Enable me to acknowledge all that is contrary to your way
of love and still forgive those who inflict harm.
May I witness your great love in my manner of living
in these conflicted times.
Amen.*

**If you enjoy reading our reflections and would like to make
a donation towards this ministry, click the button below!**

Support CSD



Center for
Spiritual
Development

COMPANIONS ON THE
SACRED JOURNEY



[Visit Website](#)

714-744-3172

[Join Mailing
List](#)



To “Unsubscribe” from the daily reflections while remaining on our general mailing list, please [email us](#). The unsubscribe function below will unsubscribe you from all emails from CSD. Please know we will never share your information.

Center for Spiritual Development | 434 A South Batavia Street | Orange, CA 92868 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)