

75th Anniversary of the Martyrdom of St. Maximilian Kolbe

Week 5. Sept 11-18

Growing Up

For many children growing up and going to school can be a difficult time. Teasing, being made fun of, not fitting in and even bullying can be an unfortunate and difficult right of passage.



It was no different for Maximilian. His intellect, his German sounding last name and his piety were easy targets for others.

His intellect, especially in the field of science was beyond the average student. And when one says beyond, it is meant literally as Maximilian would sketch drawings of space ships and inter planetary travel. Because of this, he gained the reputation of being "odd" as others would tease him about being their "Franciscan spaceman."

All a student had to do to hurt him was to mention that he was German and not Polish because his last name appeared more German than Polish. This of course hurt him deeply because of his profound love for Poland.

Because of his piety, rather than call him Maximilian, some would call him "Marmalade."

When asked if he was disturbed that his classmates would enjoy themselves at his expense, he merely responded by saying, "their gibing is not malicious."

Already at a young age he was learning to turn the other cheek. One cannot take the blows of a Nazi prison guard until one learns first to take the teasing of fellow students and classmates!

Prayer :

Lord Jesus, the soldiers repeatedly mocked you when they crowned you with thorns, and yet you humbly remained silent. When I cannot change the way others treat me, may I accept with humility the mocking and teasing of others and so wear the crown you wore.

Meditations and Questions:

1. How do I respond when others tease or make fun of me?
2. Have I ever teased or made fun of another?
3. When should I speak up and when should I remain silent in the face of teasing and mockery?
4. Where do I need healing in my life?
5. Whose forgiveness do I need to seek personally or in prayer?