

75th Anniversary of the Martyrdom of St. Maximilian Kolbe

Week 10 October 16 - 23

The Colosseum



As a seminarian, Maximilian contemplated the sacrifice and the mystery of martyrdom.

Standing on the roof of the Seminary (Seraphicum) one can look out over the Roman Forum and in the distance is the Colosseum.

After each visit to the Colosseum, Maximilian liked to read what St. Therese of Lisieux wrote of her visit to the Colosseum.

"How rapid my heartbeat as my lips touched the earth sanctified by the blood of those first Christians! I pleaded for the grace to achieve a martyr's witness in confessing our Lord, and deep in my heart I felt that my petition had been granted."

Once when Maximilian visited the Colosseum he pointed to the spot where St. Ignatius of Antioch shed his blood and was martyred in the year 110 A.D. and said,

"Ignatius believed that the privilege of martyrdom was a sign of divine love which God extended only to a select few."

Later he wrote in his diary on June 16, 1913,

"O Immaculata, thou art blessed in eternity and I belong completely to thee. If it be thy will, thou mayest call me from life in this very moment. If it please thee to summon me later, then so be it."

Prayer :

O Immaculata, Queen of Martyrs, intercede that I might unite my daily sacrifices and crosses with the blood of the Martyrs and give glory to my Crucified Lord, Who shed His blood for me.

Meditations and Questions

1. Who is my favorite Martyr? Why?
2. What are the crosses in my life?
3. When have I rejected the cross?
4. Who carries the cross that needs my help?