

The 75th Anniversary of the Martyrdom of St. Maximilian Kolbe

Week 51



A Holocaust of Sacrifice

The Holocaust of World War II was a holocaust of Man against men.

The Nazis attempt to eradicate Jews and others from the face of the earth was a genocide that was ultimately a suicide.

A suicide which Man inflicted upon himself.

The death of one man is a loss for all men.

The genocide of one race is a genocide of the human race.

Auschwitz was a holocaust of taking life.

The Scriptures however speak of a Holocaust that was life giving.

The word holocaust that is found in the Scriptures comes from the Greek and Hebrew meaning "whole," "burnt" and "that which goes up."

In the Scriptures the people of Israel made burn offerings of first born animals and first fruits to God, as a sign of their love and devotion.

By offering the "first born and first fruits," it was a sign that God came first in their lives.

"I will offer to you burnt offerings of fatlings, with the smoke of the sacrifice of rams; I will make an offering of bulls and goats." Ps. 66:15

But as time went on, these holocaust of animals and fruit became empty gestures, as the people's hearts were far from God.

Through the Prophets, God repeatedly called His people to the true sacrifice.

Do I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Ps.50:13

Offer to God a sacrifice of Thanksgiving. Ps. 50:14

He who brings thanksgiving as his sacrifice honors me. Ps. 50:23

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;

A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Ps. 51:17

It was Christ who offered the perfect and total holocaust of Himself on the cross.

As the First Born (Rev. 1:5,) and the First Fruits (1Cor. 15:23), He sacrificed Himself.

His was a Holocaust that brings life to to others.

It was the Sacrifice of Christ that Maximilian imitated and offered in Auschwitz.

A sacrifice that does not take life but gives it, as Maximilian sacrificed himself so that another man might live.

While the Nazis were committing the holocaust against the Jews and others, Maximilian was performing a holocaust of his own.

A sacrifice pleasing to the Lord. Eph.5:2

Consecration to the Virgin Mary is a personal holocaust to God, whereby one gives one's entire "life, death and eternity" to her in the Holy Spirit for the Kingdom of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the glory of God the Father.

Auschwitz was the culmination of a consecrated life to the Immaculata whereby Maximilian truly became a holocaust, "a whole burnt offering up to God."

Prayer : I offer up not my enemies, nor my possessions but my whole life, death and eternity to God as did St. Maximilian. Through the intercession of the Immaculata, may my sacrifice be pleasing and acceptable to God. Amen

Meditations and Questions :

1. What did Jesus sacrifice on the cross?
2. How was Maximilian's life a sacrifice of praise?
3. What sacrifices do I make?
4. Is my consecration complete?