

Institute of National Remembrance

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Saint Maximilian Maria Kolbe (1894—1941)

“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:13)

Saint Maximilian Maria Kolbe (born Rajmund Kolbe) went down in history as a martyr who laid down his life for another man in the German Nazi concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz. That event was preceded by the Franciscan’s years of ministry, full of immense faith in Divine Providence. Militia Immaculatae, an organisation that propagated the Marian devotions, became his opus magnum. At Niepokalanów he established a Franciscan monastery and a modern publishing centre. He did not limit his evangelisation activity to Poland, as he created a Japanese Niepokalanów – Mugenzai no Sono (The Garden of the Immaculata) – in Nagasaki. He was sanctified as a confessor of the faith and a martyr. Not even repression by the communist authorities in Poland could hinder the continuation of St. Maximilian Kolbe’s work.

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