

DIVINE MERCY

IN THE SECOND GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD

GUIDEBOOK

Questions for Review and Discussion

Session 9

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Jesus, I Trust in You

Nihil Obstat: Fr. Luis Granados, DCJM, S.T.D. *Censor Deputatus*
Imprimatur: Most Reverend Samuel J. Aquila, S.T.L., Archbishop of Denver
December 9, 2015

Imprimi Potest:
Very Rev. Kazimierz Chwalek, MIC
Provincial Superior
The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy Province
November 16, 2015

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Diary of St. Maria Faustina Kowalska: Divine Mercy in My Soul © 1987 Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception

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Printed in the United States of America
978-0-9966768-7-8

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SESSION NINE

MARY'S KNIGHT

Step 1

INTRODUCTION

In the mix of people and events surrounding the Second Greatest Story Ever Told, it's important for us to recognize one person we've hardly mentioned, a person who influenced St. John Paul II and countless others in his passion for the glory of God and his amazing mercy.

Step 2

OPENING PRAYER

*Heavenly Father,
we give thanks for your abundant love and mercy.
Please give us the grace to share your love and mercy
with everyone around us, friend or adversary,
just as many of your children
who came before us have done.
We ask this all in Jesus's name
and through the powerful intercession
of Our Blessed Mother, Mary...*

*Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners
now and in the hour of our death. Amen.*

Step 3

VIEW VIDEO FOR EPISODE 9

SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION

Step 4

[Go over these questions in your small group. It's alright if your group only gets through a few of them during your discussion.]

1. What was your favorite part from the video? In other words, what most touched your heart or enlightened your mind?

2. In the video, I shared that when I first saw a photo of St. Maximilian Kolbe, I didn't like him, because he looked so stern and intense. Later, I discovered that his was a beautiful intensity, an intensity of love. Now, there are many people we interact with in our day-to-day lives about whom we know the obvious (teacher, police officer, mother, father, wife) or we may even judge them based on their appearance. But then, later, we discover their beautiful hearts. ***Now, recall an acquaintance only known through job or function (janitor, cafeteria worker) until you learned about his or her life burdens and faith in God. How did you learn about the life and faith of that person? How did you change your perception of him or her? What helps you now to see beyond the functions, jobs, or appearances of people around you?***

3. The young Kolbe was like a fire hose with the nozzle on the mist setting. In other words, he had a lot of intensity, but he didn't exactly know where to direct it and ended up going off in a thousand different directions. ***Have you ever felt that you were going off in a thousand directions without a single purpose? What experience or insight helped tighten the nozzle so that you became more focused? In other words, what has tightened your focus, giving you purpose and direction in life? If this study and group experience has helped you with a specific change in your focus, purpose, or direction, please share how it has done so.***

4. The single idea that most tightened the nozzle for St. Maximilian Kolbe, directing his intensity to a single goal, was probably this one: *a total consecration to Jesus through Mary is the quickest and easiest way to become a saint.* After all, Kolbe wanted to give the greatest possible glory to God, and what better way to give him glory than by becoming a saint? And what's better: one saint or ten saints, ten saints or a thousand saints? For Kolbe, being an apostle of Marian consecration was how he believed he could win the whole world for God, under the generalship of Mary Immaculate, as quickly as possible. ***What impression does Kolbe's bold goal make on you? How have you been an apostle of Marian consecration in the past? How might you be one in the future?***

Step 4

SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION

5. Saint Maximilian Kolbe continually asked, “How can I give the greatest possible glory to God?” *What’s the difference between desiring to give glory to God versus giving God the greatest possible glory? How might you give the greatest possible glory to God?*

6. The essence of Kolbe’s army for Mary Immaculate is “to be an instrument in her Immaculate hands” — and that is a powerful statement. It’s like this: Mary is the mother of all humanity, and she sees the sins and suffering of each and every one of her children, which breaks her heart. Of course, she longs to help them, and she does so through her prayers, but she also wants us to help her. Specifically, she’s looking for people who will give her permission to use them as living instruments in her hands to help her children — that is what it means to be an instrument in Mary’s hands. *Have you ever experienced someone as an instrument of your love to your child, your parent, another relative, or to a friend? Perhaps it was an instance where you had difficulty in that relationship. Perhaps it was a time when you couldn’t get through to your loved one, but this other person did. Share what happened when the other person helped. How did you feel about their help? Were you grateful? Consider Mary’s gratitude to those who offer themselves as instruments for her to help her children. She is our Immaculate Mother asking for our help for the sake of all her children. How will you say yes to being her instrument?*



SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION

Step 4

7. Saying yes to being an instrument in Mary's hands is not only a gift to our spiritual mother, Mary, it's also a gift to our heavenly Father. After all, because of the wound of original sin that makes us doubt his goodness, our heavenly Father has an uphill battle of trying to get people to trust in him. Of course, he sent his Son to teach us his mercy, but because his Son, Jesus, is also God, people tend to fear Jesus, too! That is where Mary comes in. She's not God, but she's an instrument of God's mercy, leading us to Jesus. She's not the source of mercy — Jesus is the source of mercy — but she's an instrument of mercy, leading us to that source. But because of various prejudices and misunderstandings, people even avoid that most tender of mothers!

So, that's where you come in. When you offer yourself to Mary as an instrument in her hands, she uses you to bring people to the Heart of her Son. **Now, describe a time when you were an instrument of such mercy, particularly to someone who wanted nothing to do with God. Why do you think they listened to you? How did that encounter impact you?**

8. Kolbe's Knights of Niepokalanow, who were part of the largest monastery in the world, truly conquered all of Poland for Mary Immaculate and prepared Poland for World War II. They brought the whole country close to Mary's Immaculate Heart, so she could comfort them as they would go through their trial by fire. In fact, just as Mary was a consolation to her Son, Jesus, as he was dying on the Cross, so she also gave consolation to the Poles as they went through their own suffering during the war. This is important because it shows us that Marian consecration isn't just about being an instrument in Mary's hands so she can comfort others. She also wants to comfort you. She is your mother, and she wants you to say yes to her, so she can be that tender, motherly presence in your life. **Share a time when you or a friend were suffering greatly and Mary brought you or your friend great comfort. Or, simply describe a time when you experienced Mary as your tender mother.**

Homework: Don't forget to read and reflect on all the questions that you don't cover during your small-group discussion!



Step 5

CONCLUSION

The intense love of St. Maximilian Kolbe is inspiring to us now, as it was also inspiring to St. John Paul II. Both men are now saints. So, we might conclude that St. Louis de Montfort's claim that Mary is the quickest, easiest, and surest means to becoming a saint has some validity. But with so many aspects to the Second Greatest Story Ever Told, how can we take what we've learned and live it in our lives? That's what we'll consider next time.

CLOSING PRAYER

*Almighty and Eternal God,
you gave us in the person of St. Maximilian Kolbe
an example of true devotion to the Immaculate Mother
of our Savior and of unselfish love for our neighbor.
Grant, we beseech you, through his intercession,
that we may grow in our understanding
and love of the Immaculata;
that we may recognize her presence, her voice, her love,
and her power with us and be filled with an ardent desire
and will to fulfill her will
[which is perfectly united with God's will] in every detail,
and thus become sharers and true instruments
of her most perfect response to you,
in the Holy Spirit through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

— Prayer from the Militia of the Immaculata

Jesus, I Trust in You

NOTES

NOTES

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.