

# PREFACE

I have the pleasure and honor to present the English language version of the two-volume collection of the writings of St. Maximilian Kolbe. This is a result of the invaluable collaboration among the friars, members of the MI and scholars around the world. Putting this important work together was not easy, given the large number of texts the Saint left behind and the difficulty of faithfully translating his thoughts. Only the combined goodwill and competence of all those who worked on this editorial initiative made such excellent results possible.

The work is even more valuable when you consider how the testimony in *Writings* leads one to appreciate and value the spirituality of the Saint. The texts provide the reader with a clear and comprehensive idea about the spiritual legacy left by the Martyr of Auschwitz.

The *Writings of Maximilian Maria Kolbe* in English is a valuable tool for scholars of the English-speaking world. They will more easily be able to explore its theological content in their own language. Those who love the figure of the Polish Franciscan, but were previously unable to access his writings, will now have that opportunity. In short, these volumes will be very useful for a very large number of people, especially in light of the fact that those who previously had been unaware of the enormous scope of his personal experiences can now know the life and the thinking of the Saint.

The translators of this English version of the original texts were guided by the masterful Italian version prepared by the then-Postulator General, Friar Cristoforo Zambelli, which has been universally acclaimed for its excellence. They labored committedly and competently to give the reader a text corresponding with Kolbe's real intentions.

The typology of *Writings* is quite expansive. Browsing through its pages one can find letters, articles, notes, news and musings, all divided according to content with each sub-category arranged in chronological order. Reading these passages, one can take a virtual flight across the spiritual experience of St. Maximilian, starting from his most exciting apostolic moments, such as

the founding of the MI, the publication of the *Knight of the Immaculata* and the establishment of the Cities of the Immaculata in Poland and Japan, to dramas including his arrest and detention in Auschwitz.

This editorial initiative has remarkable breadth. It should be an enhancement alongside the other language editions of the writings of St. Kolbe. Until now, complete versions of these writings were only available in Italian, Spanish and Polish. I applaud the creation of this impressive work. It will surely be useful for the spiritual growth and edification of many people.

I am sure that the *Writings of Maximilian Maria Kolbe* in English will be of important value to the universal Church, given the widespread interest people have in the Saint. I entrust the success of this initiative to the intercession of the Mary Immaculate knowing that these volumes will offer considerable food for thought to the confreres of Father Kolbe and all the faithful.

Friar Marco Tasca  
Minister General  
OFM Conv.