

## Some Thoughts for August 2023

Marge Loenser

This month we welcome all the lovely crepe myrtle trees and snowball bushes that wave to us each day! August breezes show them off, as well as her colorful gladiolas! The name August comes from a Roman emperor-- Caesar Augustus who reigned from 29 BC to 14 AD. August means "venerable" or "consecrated".

This whole month is dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. We celebrate many great saints this month. We also celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration on Sunday, August 6th and the Feast of the Assumption of our Blessed Mother, on the 15th.

I would like to discuss two saints that were martyred during the Nazi occupation of Europe. On the 9th we celebrate St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, and on the 14th, St. Maximilian Kolbe. St. Teresa, born as Edith Stein, was a German Jewish philosopher who converted to the Catholic church. In time she became a Discalced Carmelite nun. In 1942 she was captured by the Gestapo, who were rounding up Jews to be placed in concentration camps. She suffered martyrdom at Auschwitz by being placed with other Jews in a gas chamber. She became a patron saint of Europe and for those who lost parents. St. Teresa Benedicta please pray for us.

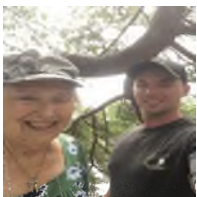
St. Maximilian Kolbe was born in Poland in 1894. He was devoted to our Blessed Mother from an early age. At age 10 Mary appeared to him and offered him two crowns: a red one for martyrdom and a white one for purity. He chose both and became a Franciscan friar. He started a worldwide consecration movement to our Blessed Mother and spread, through print, an apostolate to her. In 1941 he was arrested by the Gestapo and imprisoned at Auschwitz; there he offered to take the place of a man condemned to death. He was locked in a small room where they tried to starve him to death. Apparently, he held on quite a while and his keepers becoming impatient, decided to kill him with a lethal injection. He is the patron saint of drug addicts, people with eating disorders, amateur radio operators and the pro-life movement. St. Maximilian, please pray for us.

To name a few other saints that we celebrate in August there is St. Alphonsus Liguori, St. Clare, St. Dominic, (who was blessed to be handed the devotion of the Holy Rosary, the apostle, St. Bartholomew, and St. Augustine--Doctor of the church.

I'd like to talk a bit of St. Clare. She was born from a wealthy Italian family in the 1200's. She was a close friend to St. Francis of Assisi. With St. Francis she co-founded the Poor Clares. The nuns went barefoot, wore coarse clothing, and begged for food. In 1234 she famously displayed the Blessed Sacrament on the convent wall, as Frederick the Second's army attacked. She prostrated herself and prayed "Good Lord, I beg You defend those I cannot protect." When Clare raised the ciborium, the soldiers scattered. She is the patron saint of eye disease, laundry, goldsmiths, bicycle messengers, good weather and needle workers. St. Clare, please pray for us.

Have a beautiful August, let us continue to pray for our country and for more priests and religious to enter the harvest. May Jesus bless us, each one!

Love,  
Marge



Marge Loenser is a member of Saint Mark's Church in Sea Girt where she is a Lector and a Eucharistic Minister. She has retired from teaching CCD at Saint Mark's. She has been a member of Catholic Women of Zion for about 30 years and is also a member of Mary Queen of Peace Prayer Community for about the same length of time. She writes for a monthly column for Saint Mark's Church Bulletin.