

# Mission Intention

## APRIL

2019 - 2020

Education for  
Community Life

Country Focus: U.S.A.

### Pope Francis' April Prayer Intention

We pray that those suffering from addiction may be helped and supported

The United States of America is widely regarded as one of the world's economic leaders. But while the USA might have more material resources than many other countries, its citizens still experience problems. One struggle the USA currently faces is the growing number of people suffering from addiction, of any kind.

One of the organizations committed to helping solve this problem is the Catholic Church. The Church has been very active in providing hope and assistance for people trying to heal from addiction. Catholic Charities and other Catholic social service agencies across the country provide referral services, sponsor outreach centers, and offer ministries of accompaniment to those trying to heal from addiction. Some bishops have also written pastoral letters calling on government leaders to pass laws to help people recover.

You can help those suffering from addiction by joining with Pope Francis in prayer during April, asking God to provide those in search of healing with the help and support they need. This prayer is especially important now, as the world responds to the Coronavirus outbreak. As hospitals turn their attention to fighting this new virus and many places shut down, it can be harder for people suffering from addiction to find the treatment they need to recover. Let us pray that those suffering from addiction may continue to find healing in these uncertain times.



### Saint Spotlight: Saint Maximilian Kolbe



"No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." This verse from the Gospel of John (15:13) is often used in reference to Saint Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish priest whose last act of kindness was to trade his life for that of a friend while both were prisoners at Auschwitz.

Ordained a priest at 24 years old, Saint Maximilian Kolbe dedicated himself to sharing the love of Christ in the decades before his death. His deep devotion to Mary led him to found the Militia of the Immaculata, an association whose goal was to give witness to the Gospel of Christ through total consecration to the Blessed Mother. He also began a monthly magazine, the *Knight of the Immaculata*, and established two evangelization centers to help him spread the Good News of Jesus.

During World War II, Saint Maximilian Kolbe gave shelter to thousands of Polish people, many of whom were Jews. He was caught in February of 1941, and sent to a prison before being transferred to Auschwitz. While at Auschwitz, he secretly heard confessions and talked to others about God's love. He was also known to share his food with others, even if this meant there was none left for him. When he found out that another prisoner with a family had been sentenced to death, he volunteered to take this prisoner's place. Saint Maximilian Kolbe died six months after his arrest, in August of 1941.

Saint Maximilian Kolbe was canonized in 1982, and is the patron saint of addicts. We celebrate his feast day on August 14.

Promoting Knowledge  
of Faith

### God's Word for Mission

*"Then God said: 'Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the tame animals, all the wild animals, and all the creatures that crawl on the earth.' God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:26-27)*

*"Human persons are willed by God; they are imprinted with God's image. Their dignity does not come from the work they do, but from the person they are." (Saint John Paul II, On the Hundredth Year, no. 11)*

# Life and Dignity of the Human Person



We have read about the Catholic social teaching theme of Life and Dignity of the Human Person in this newsletter before. Life and Dignity of the Human Person is a broad theme that includes many different topics. This month, we will focus on one of those topics: human dignity.

The Church teaches that every person is born with dignity because they are a child of God. When we interact with others, we are called to recognize the face of Christ in them, and remember they are worthy of our respect and compassion simply because they are created in the image and likeness of God.

It is important to remember this idea of human dignity when we think about how the Church asks us to respond to those suffering from addiction. In his address to a meeting sponsored by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in November of

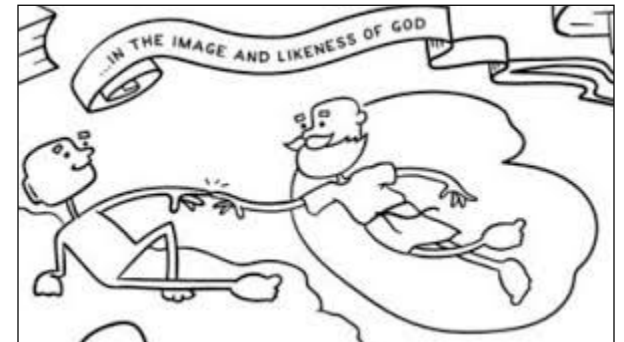
2016, Pope Francis said “It is also fundamental that we...give joy back to [those suffering from addiction] so that they can regain the dignity that one day they lost.”

With the world’s full attention on the Coronavirus outbreak, it can be hard to remember those facing other challenges. But God wants everyone to share in His freedom, love, and happiness, always. That is why it is important that Catholics still try to share our hope and bear witness to God’s love with those trying to heal from addiction, even during this time of crisis.

As you watch this month’s video, think about how the Catholic social teaching theme of Life and Dignity of the Human Person can help us continue the Church’s work to minister to all those in need and respond in love to those suffering from addiction as a reminder of their worth as God’s son or daughter.

## CAFOD Human Dignity Animation: [Click Here](#)

1. The video states: “Since God is reflected in every person, the dignity of every person must be respected.” What does this mean to you?
2. Why do you think human dignity is sometimes described as the cornerstone of Catholic social teaching?
3. If we all reflect God, how can you live so that others see Christ in you?
4. Name two ways you can respect human dignity in your daily life.



## Mission Petitions

- ✚ Let us pray for all those struggling with addiction, that they may have access to the treatment they need in all circumstances.
- ✚ Let us pray for all those who love someone struggling with addiction, that they may have faith and patience as they show their love.
- ✚ Let us pray that we may all trust in the mercy of God through whom all things are possible, even in the midst of the Coronavirus.
- ✚ Let us pray for the Church, that it may always be attentive to those in need.

Dear God,

Saint Maximilian Kolbe showed hope in despair, and was an example of your love to all those he met. Help us follow his example and give us the courage to proclaim the power of Christ’s love to the hungry, oppressed, those suffering from addiction, and all those in need of your healing. Amen.