

Wednesday Whispers

illuminating the essence of Precious
Blood spirituality, glistening through the
prism of scripture

A weekly reflection by members
of the Precious Blood Community

August 14, 2024

Fr. Dave Matz, C.P.P.S.

*“The cross is the school of love. A single act of love makes
the soul return to life. Don’t ever forget to love.”*

Maximilian Kolbe



As Jesus discusses the process of reconciliation today among his disciples and ends that message with the gift we have been given to bind and loose when it comes to forgiving each other. I am puzzled by the last statement, “... then treat him (*or her, they or them*) as you would a Gentile or a tax collector.” Of course, my mind goes to the writer of this specific Gospel, Matthew, the tax collector. And, since Matthew is writing this gospel in Antioch, up in Syria, he is proclaiming this Good News to a mixed group of Jewish and Gentile persons. We may also recall how many times we are to forgive each other – seventy times seven times. Which to me signifies we strive to forgive always and stay in relationship even with those cast out of the community to strive to loosen bonds, not bind people up.

Today is the feast day of Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish Catholic Franciscan priest who was martyred in Auschwitz, having given his life to save the life of a stranger in 1941. Maximilian had a burning love for Jesus, a zeal for souls, and a love of neighbor that knew no limits. He sacrificed his own life because at the feet of Christ crucified, he

grew, learned and lived the message of love that makes souls return to life. He knew that wherever two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus, and we ask, Christ is there walking with us, giving us life even to the point of sacrificing all of it, life even in death! He didn't walk away from suffering and death but walked toward it so that someone could live. Fr. Tomas Halik, a Czech Catholic priest, writes, "It is where you touch human suffering, and maybe only there, that you will realize that I am alive, the 'it's me.' You will meet me wherever people suffer. do not shy away from me in any of those meetings. 'Don't be afraid. Do not be unbelieving but believe.'"

"A single act of love makes the soul live!" In our time, candidates for Missouri public offices incite fear and hatred: *"Take guns to Congress; show them who's the boss!"* *"Flamethrowers tell them where to go!"* *"I'm always packing, and when I take aim, I don't miss."* Where are the acts of love? Have we abandoned, deserted, ignored, and forgotten God? It's our responsibility now to make real the presence of God in our midst because does God ever really leave us? God is in our midst, in our lives, by our willingness to live in love and peace and work for love and the peace of others. Jesus Christ crucified is the ultimate source of God's love poured out so that we can live. Maximilian challenges us to, *"never forget to love!"* Believe it!

Fr. Dave Matz is the Director of Sonnino Mission House in Berkeley, CA. He ministers to Spanish-speaking persons, immigrants, and the LGBTQ+ community. He accompanies and advocates for those who are on the margins of society, offering safe space and hospitality. To learn more about the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, [click here](#).

This weekly reflection is made available to all who are part of our Precious Blood family. Feel free to share it with others. Would you be willing to write a reflection? If so, please contact Vicky Otto at votto@pbspiritualityinstitute.org