# August 14th: Memorial of Saint Maximilian Kolbe, Priest and Martyr

**Gospel text (*Jn* 15:12-16):** Jesus said to his disciples, «This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you. There is no greater love than this, to give one's life for one's friends (...)».

***St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe, priest and martyr (1894-1941)***

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Today the Church venerates as a saint a man who was granted to fulfill these words of the Redeemer: «There is no greater love than this, to give one's life for one's friends» (Jn 15,13). About four million people were killed in the Auschwitz concentration camp . The disobedience to the commandment of God creator of life: "You will not kill", caused in that place the immense catastrophe of so many innocents.

Father Kolbe vindicated his right to life, declaring the availability to go to death himself instead of a father. Maximilian Maria reaffirmed the exclusive right of the Creator on the life of the innocent man and testified about Christ and love: “In this we have known charity: in which He gave his life for us; and we must give our lives for our brothers ”(1Jn 3,16).

—Maximilian did not die; "He gave his life ... for his brother." His death became a sign of victory over the whole system of contempt and hatred towards man and towards the divine part that exists in man; victory similar to that achieved by Our Lord Jesus Christ on Mount Calvary.