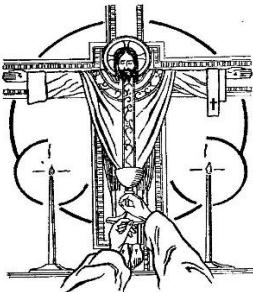


My Beloved Sons, My Priests



THE † ETERNAL † SACRIFICE

(Image on Archbishop Paul F. Leibold's anniversary of ordination card)

"Beloved sons, so cherished and greatly blessed among the sons of men, be careful to uphold the sanctity and dignity of your calling. Let the faithful see in you the favored and especially loved imitators of the Son of God. Be modest in your dress and speech as becomes those of so exalted a vocation. The apparel and manners of a man of the world is not for you, who, though living in the world, must not take on its ways. It is through you that the grace of the Sacraments is given to souls. Strive then to make yourselves more worthy receptacles to receive these graces and transmit them in turn to the souls under your care.

Dear sons, I ask you to practice self-denial in a special manner, because it is you who must lead my children in the way of peace. Yet this peace will come only by way of the sword, the flaming sword of love. If, therefore, you love my Son and wish to honor me, heed my admonition and be the first to give an example of a life of penance and self-denial. Thus, by sanctification from within you, you will become a bright and burning light to the faithful, who look to you for help and guidance.

I am pleased, dearly beloved sons, by the honor and love you have until now accorded me. Will you now go further and honor me yet more by taking my words to your hearts and doing what I ask?"

(Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil, The Diary, OUR LADY OF AMERICA®, Lodi, OH, Pg. 20.)

Our Lady addressed these words to Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil on September 26-27, 1957, just a year after her first appearance as Our Lady of America®. She bid Sister write them down very carefully because they are of the utmost importance for her beloved sons, the priests, who are called to the exalted vocation and extraordinary imitation of Jesus in carrying on His Eternal Priesthood here on earth. Again, she calls for prayer and penance and sanctification from within so as to be a burning light for the faithful. She begs her priests to take her words to their hearts and to do what she asks.

On July 18, 1959, less than two years later, in locutions with Our Lord, Sister records His sad words regarding His priests and religious, His chosen ones.

"Oh, the pride of souls! How they resist My grace! O My priests, My religious, what would I not do for you if you would only let me! I come daily laden with graces, which you daily refuse. What am I to say of you, my best beloved? How long will you resist My love? It is from you I expect everything, and you give Me but the husks of your affections. How long will I bear with you, O My chosen ones! How long will you spurn My approaches?

My little white dove, it was this ingratitude on the part of My priests and My religious that caused Me so much sorrow in My passion. Oh, how they resist My grace! How they fight against My love! So fearful are they that I will deprive them of their tawdry trinkets that they turn their backs lest they see the reproach in My eyes.” (Diary, Pg. 33.)

On July 18, 1980, twenty-one years later, Our Lady said her faithful children, among whom are priests and religious who live lives of prayer and dedication to the work of her Son, are such a consolation to her, but, she says, there must be many more of such self-sacrificing souls or suffering will continue to encompass the world and the long-awaited peace will not come. Our Lady lamented over those in high places in the Church who disobey and disrespect Christ's Vicar on earth, and who betray the teachings inspired by the Divine Spirit who remains with the Church until the end of time. (Diary, Pgs. 37, 43.)

In an earlier 1954 locution, Jesus had spoken to Sister about His priests and chosen ones, and all souls, whom He invites to find refuge in His Heart from the just anger of His Father. We give it in entirety so you may profit from the full impact of Jesus' words.

“My Heart is a refuge for all sinners. If only they would come to me, I would enclose them in My Heart. There they would be cleansed and My Father’s anger would not reach them. Alas, bride of My Heart, alas, for those who will not come to Me. Where will they hide from My Father’s anger? Pray, pray, pray, oh My little white dove, pray and sacrifice yourself for the souls of poor sinners. How many are lost because there are no prayers said for them, no sacrifices made for them.

Where are your prayers, oh My Priests and Religious, where are your sacrifices? Do you not know that sinners will not be converted unless prayer and penance call down the grace of God upon them? My Chosen Ones, you in particular are responsible for the souls of poor sinners. It is to you I have entrusted them. As their spiritual fathers and mothers you must care for them, and by your unceasing prayers in their behalf, lead them safely to My Father’s House.

Oh, My Well-beloved Ones, you have become selfish and thoughtless. You have forgotten the greatness of your responsibilities. Unless you become saints, there will be no hope for poor sinners, for it is My wish that through your sacrificial lives the souls of poor sinners will be saved.

My little white dove, tell your spiritual Father, him whom I have placed over you to guide and direct you, tell him that My Heart is pleased with his efforts to make Me loved. I will bless him and make his work fruitful in behalf of all the souls entrusted to his care and priestly ministrations. Tell him, if he would please Me more, to double his efforts in making known the love of My Heart for poor sinners. I ask of him what I continue to ask of you, oh bride of My Heart, prayer and penance. As a priest after My Own Heart, I will be with him in all his trials and sorrows. Tell him not to become discouraged at the crosses awaiting him for I, the Great High-Priest, go before him carrying the heaviest part of his cross.

I seek always the humble and lowly of heart and since I have found two such, so I have entrusted to them a great Mission, but become not vain, for I have chosen him and you only because of your unworthiness and lack of virtue. Let this thought be with you always, that you may remember that it is I working through you, Who sanctify you for His glory and the salvation of souls. You are poor instruments in My hands, but through you a Great Work will be accomplished. I am the Great Sculptor of souls. With hammer and chisel I form them that they may glorify My Father by their beauty and perfection. Be pliant in My Hands, oh My two lowly ones, My Chosen Priest and My little white dove, and then will you be formed into My likeness and through you I will be formed in souls. (Sister’s letter to Rev. Paul F. Leibold, her spiritual director, Feb. 20, 1954.)

In a beautiful encyclical, “**Ad Catholici Sacerdotii, On the Catholic Priesthood**”, Pope Pius XI wrote, in 1935, that the human race has always felt the need for a priesthood, men charged to be mediators between God and humanity, just as Jesus, the God-man, is our mediator with His Father. These men should consecrate themselves entirely to this mediation as the purpose of their lives, for they are set aside to offer God public prayers and sacrifices in the name of all humanity. Human society is bound to the worship of God as Supreme Lord and first beginning and last end of all things. Pope Pius XI spoke of the need for reparation for the blasphemies, wickedness and crimes which dishonor humanity in an age perhaps unparalleled in its need for the mercy and pardon of God. The enemies of the Church know the importance of the priesthood and so focus their efforts to destroy the Church first on its priesthood. Slay the shepherd and the flock will scatter, but against the Church the gates of hell shall not prevail. If Pope Pius XI spoke of the need for reparation and divine mercy for the wickedness of his age in the 1930’s, what would he say regarding the wickedness of today and the attacks not only on the priesthood and the Church, but on life itself, and on true religion with the blasphemous legalization of sin and the growing trend toward Satanism that viciously mocks the holy, the All Holy One?

The ineffable greatness of the human priest stands forth in all its splendor; for he has power over the very Body of Jesus Christ, and makes It present upon our altars. In the name of Christ Himself he offers It as a victim infinitely pleasing to the Divine Majesty. ... Now a priest is the appointed “dispenser of the mysteries of God,” for the benefit of the members of the mystical Body of Christ; since he is the ordinary minister of nearly all the Sacraments, — those channels through which the grace of the Savior flows for the good of humanity. ... But among all these powers of the priest over the Mystical Body of Christ for the benefit of the faithful, there is one of which the simple mention made above will not content us. This is that power which, as St. John Chrysostom says: “God gave neither to Angels nor Archangels” — the power to remit sins. “Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain they are retained”; a tremendous power, so peculiar to God that even human pride could not make the mind conceive that it could be given to man. “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” And, when we see it exercised by a mere man there is reason to ask ourselves, ... “Who is this that forgiveth sins also?” But it is so: the God-Man who possessed the “power on earth to forgive sins” willed to hand it on to His priests; to relieve, in His divine generosity and mercy, the need of moral purification which is rooted in the human heart. (Paragraphs 8-20.)

Such is the dignity and power God has bestowed upon His priests. In 1954 Jesus called Father Leibold a priest after His own Heart, but already in 1925 Pope Pius XI had declared the humble Cure of Ars, Jean-Baptiste-Marie Vianney, who died August 4, 1859, a saint and model for all priests and canonized him. He then committed all shepherds of souls to the patronage of John Vianney to promote their spiritual welfare throughout the world. What a humble sight was that holy man with a head of shining long hair and a thin face, wasted from long fasting, which was radiant with the holiness from within that drew crowds of people back to thoughts of salvation and repentance and spiritual things. He was truly a priest after Jesus’ own Heart! Thank God for holy priests! And pray for more.

Pray, pray, pray for all those who have no one to pray for them lest they be lost forever!

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