

## Joseph, the Hidden Figure of Bethlehem

It is true, my daughter, that *immediately* after my conception, I was, through the future merits of Jesus and because of my exceptional role of future Virgin-Father, cleansed from the stain of original sin. I was from that moment confirmed in grace and never had the slightest stain on my soul. This is my unique privilege among men.

My pure heart also was from the first moment of existence inflamed with love for God. *Immediately*, at the moment when my soul was cleansed from original sin, grace was infused into it in such abundance that, excluding my holy spouse, I surpassed the holiness of the highest angel in the angelic choir.

My heart suffered with the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Mine was a silent suffering, for it was my special vocation to hide and shield, as long as God willed, the Virgin Mother and Son from the malice and hatred of men. The most painful of my sorrows was that I knew beforehand of their passion, yet would not be there to console them. Their future suffering was ever present to me and became my daily cross. I became, in union with my holy spouse, co-redemptor of the human race. Through compassion for the *sufferings of Jesus and Mary* I co-operated, *as no other*, in the salvation of the world.

(Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil, The Diary, OUR LADY OF AMERICA©, Fostoria, Ohio, Page 13.)

Though she did not see him at this time, St. Joseph spoke these words to Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil about a week after Our Lady's first appearance as Our Lady of America on September 26, 1956. Because God willed to send His Son into our world as a baby in order to restore the human family and re-consecrate human life from the first moment of conception to natural death, He entered our world within a family. God had created the human family in the natural order in the dynamic of the family life of the Trinity: hence, father, mother and child to mirror Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God ordained that every child should have a father and a mother and wrote it in our nature that the father and the mother should each contribute half of the genetic make-up needed for the procreation of a child. God Himself, a partner in the procreative endeavor, would breathe into the child an immortal soul. God intended procreation to take place in a personal relationship, not laboratories or otherwise. Hence, Jesus, in taking on a human nature and to be fully human, would dwell nine months in the womb of Mary, and would grow up within a human family, the Holy Family. This family, however, was unique. Unlike Adam's family created in the order of nature, this family was created in the supernatural order. Jesus, Mary and Joseph form an earthly trinity in the hypostatic order of grace. In this order, they rise higher than the angels in holiness, though in the order of nature, the angels excel in splendor over them. Mary and Joseph were each given unique privileges and unprecedented grace, not given to any other creature, in accordance with the role

each would play in the redemptive mission of Jesus. Joseph, assigned by the angel in a dream to give Jesus His name, became therefore, by Jewish law, a true father to Jesus and would be for us a model of the Heavenly Father's love for His children. Our Catholic Faith honors both Mary and Joseph as Virgins, though to all outward appearances they seemed like any other married couple. As St. Joseph stated, it was his mission to stand in the place of the heavenly Father over Jesus on earth and to hide from a darkened world the splendor of Mary's Perpetual Virginity, and therefore his, and the divinity of Jesus, until the time God wished it to be revealed. This is the radical revelation of God's redeeming grace that the world was not yet ready to receive but for which it had been prepared for centuries.

In a world suffering from the breakdown of the family, the loss of fatherhood in so many families, and the growing disregard for its importance in the headship of the family, these words spoken by St. Joseph to Sister Mildred in a vision on the eve of his feast, March 11, 1958, are extremely important. Already in the 1940's Sister understood her mission was for the renewal of the family, which would be accomplished through imitation of the Holy Family's practice of the simple duties and virtues of family life. St. Joseph said...

**Kneel down, my daughter, for what you will hear and what you will write will bring countless souls to a new way of life. Through you, small one, the Trinity desires to make known to souls its desire to be adored, honored, and loved within the kingdom, the interior kingdom of their hearts.**

**I bring to souls the purity of my life and the obedience that crowned it. All fatherhood is blest in me whom the Eternal Father chose as His representative on earth, the Virgin-Father of His own Divine Son. Through me the Heavenly Father has blessed all fatherhood, and through me He continues and will continue to do so till the end of time.**

**My spiritual fatherhood extends to all God's children, and together with my Virgin Spouse I watch over them with great love and solicitude. Fathers must come to me, small one, to learn obedience to authority: to the Church always, as the mouthpiece of God, to the laws of the country in which they live, insofar as these do not go against God and their neighbor.**

**Mine was perfect obedience to the Divine Will, as it was shown and made known to me by the Jewish law and religion. To be careless in this is most displeasing to God and will be severely punished in the next world.**

**Let fathers also imitate my great purity of life and the deep respect I held for my Immaculate Spouse. Let them be an example to their children and fellowmen, never willfully doing anything that would cause scandal among God's people. Fatherhood is from God, and it must take once again its rightful place among men. (The Dairy, Pg. 27.)**

Then Sister described seeing St. Joseph's pure heart on a brown cross. Flames came from the heart and in their midst was a white lily. The cross was that of the passion that was ever present to him. He said his privilege of being chosen by God to be the Virgin-Father of Jesus was exceeded only by the privileges bestowed on his holy Spouse. The following day, he spoke of the Trinity's desire to honor his unique fatherhood on the First Wednesday of the month. He asked that we pray the Joyful Mysteries of the rosary that day, honoring the time he spent on earth with Jesus and Mary. He was king in their home in Nazareth, sheltering the Prince of Peace and the Queen of Heaven. He said the head of the family should be respected and obeyed, and in turn, be a true father and protector to those under his care. The imitation of the Holy Family is the way to peace which comes from God alone. He said the Divine Trinity has placed into the Holy Family's keeping the peace of the world. Then suddenly, Sister was given a marvelous vision of St. Joseph suspended above a large globe, his eyes gazing toward heaven in ecstasy, his hands extended similar to those of a priest during Mass. His hair and beard were dark brown and he wore a white robe that reached to his ankles, over which he wore a cloak.

**His appearance, though quite youthful, gave at the same time the impression of rare maturity combined with great strength. He seemed a bit taller than medium height. The lines of his face appeared strong and purposeful, softened somewhat by a gentle serenity. I also saw his most pure heart at this time. Moreover, I saw the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove hovering above his head.**

**Standing sideways, facing each other, were two angels, one on the right, the other on the left. Each carried what appeared to be a small pillow in a satin covering, the pillow on the right bearing a gold crown, the one on the left, a gold scepter. The angels were all white, even their faces and hair. It was a beautiful whiteness that reminded me of the stainlessness of heaven. Then I heard these words: "Thus should he be honored whom the King desires to honor."**

A bit later St. Joseph asked Sister to kneel down and receive his blessing.

**"May Jesus and Mary through my hands bestow upon you eternal peace."**

**(The Diary, Pgs. 28-31.)**