

The 57th Anniversary of Our Lady of America® The Divine Indwelling - the Kingdom Within

“Acquire the habit of speaking to God as if you were alone with Him, familiarly and with confidence and love, as to the dearest and most loving of friends. Speak to Him often of your business, your plans, your troubles, your fears – of everything that concerns you. Converse with Him confidently and frankly; for God is not wont to speak to a soul that does not speak to Him.”

(St. Alphonsus de Liguori, HOW TO CONVERSE WITH GOD, Tan Books, Foreword.)

Who of us does not remember the terrible shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado on April 20, 1999? Rachel Joy Scott, a vibrant seventeen year old, died that day. It is doubtful that Rachel ever heard of St. Alphonsus de Liguori, yet she had grasped the meaning of his words and something wonderful of the mystery of the Divine Indwelling in the depth of her soul. Her two great dreams were to make an impact on the world, especially on young people, and to live in the presence of God. This ordinary girl who lived a brief but extraordinary life fulfilled both those dreams with her passionate love for God that inspired and overflowed onto so many. She kept a diary and wrote letters to God about the day's events, her challenges and questions, her dread over feeling His absence in her school, and her intuition that she would never live long enough to ever get married. Her simple life gives testimony to Christ's words, **“The kingdom of God is within you”** (Lk 17:20), for she knew God was using her to bring the light of His presence into the midst of the darkness that has overtaken our schools. She knew He alone could, and would, satisfy the longings He had wedged into her heart.

The message of Our Lady of America® given to Sister Mildred (Mary Ephrem) Neuzil, begs each of us to enter into our own interior castle where God waits as the Eternal Lover for His beloved, to speak to our hearts. **“Be still and know that I am God,”** the psalmist says, lest the noise of the world keep us from hearing the secrets of the Divine. St. Alphonsus goes on to say on page 4:

In short, so great is God's love for you that He seems to love no one but you. And therefore, you should love no one but Him. [That is, with an absolute love] You should be able to say to Him: “My beloved to me, and I to Him.” (Cant 2:16) My God has given Himself entirely to me, and I give my whole self to Him; He has chosen me for His beloved, and I choose Him from among all for my only love.” [St. Alphonsus, on page 51, further spoke of Venerable Sister Seraphina of Carpi musing over the fact that the convent's mule was incapable of loving God. She said:]

“Poor beast, you do not know God; neither can you love Him” – and the mule acted as though it would give expression to its grief by shedding abundant tears. Thus you who can love God should be incited to make frequent acts of love when

you see animals that are unable to know and love Him. [Perhaps we should make greater acts of love when we see people who are unable to know and love Him.]

St. Teresa of Avila, doctor of the Church and mystic, speaks to us of the interior castle of the soul in these words.

It came to me that the soul is like a castle made exclusively of diamond or some other very clear crystal. In this castle are a multitude of dwellings, just as in heaven there are many mansions. If we muse on this deeply, friends, we will see that the soul of a righteous person is none other than a garden in which the Beloved takes great delight. What do you think a place might be like that such a king—so powerful and wise, so pure and filled with all good things—would find so delightful? I myself can come up with nothing as magnificent as the beauty and amplitude of a soul.

(St. Teresa of Avila, translated by Mirabai Starr, THE INTERIOR CASTLE, The Berkley Publishing Group, Pgs. 35-36.)

Perhaps this call to intimate love of God expressed in terms of espousal frightens us. Perhaps we see how little of ourselves we give to others, how then can we give our whole selves to God? Perhaps we are afraid to love even though it is the one thing everyone desires, because it demands dying to oneself in order to gift oneself to the other. Perhaps those of us who love power over others shy from love, for love gives the Other power over us.

Sister Mildred Neuzil was a small one, like Rachel, though not in years. It was her smallness, her emptiness, that invited the greatness of God to fill her with His Presence. Already in November of 1954, Our Lady spoke interiorly to Sister about God's paradise on earth in the little home of Nazareth where Mary and Joseph centered all their living on Jesus; where heaven quite literally came down to earth; where God truly walked in the midst of men. Who can teach us better than Mary and Joseph what it means to have God so intimately present in their hearts and in their home? Who can show us better how to live the duties of ordinary life with the most extraordinary grace?

“It is the wish of my Son that fathers and mothers strive to imitate me and my chaste spouse in our holy life at Nazareth. We practiced the simple virtues of family life, Jesus our Son being the center of all our love and activity. The Holy Trinity dwelt with us in a manner far surpassing anything that can ever be imagined. For ours was the earthly paradise where once again God walked among men. [Adam and Eve walked with God in paradise until sin drove them from His presence.] ... The Divine Trinity will dwell in your midst only if you are faithful in practicing the virtues of our life at Nazareth. Then, you also, my children, you also will become another paradise. God will then walk among you and you will have peace.”



(Sister Mildred (Mary Ephrem) Neuzil, Diary, OUR LADY OF AMERICA©,
Fostoria, Ohio, Pg. 8.)

St. Joseph, too, spoke to Sister Mildred of the Divine Indwelling and called it “**The Secret of Secrets,**” a new way of life. We ponder these words often because their meaning is profound. In a letter to Father Paul Leibold, her spiritual director, Sister stated:

Like His Holy Spouse, St. Joseph also never ceases to remind me of my first duty, the first duty of every soul, especially for the chosen, of living with God in the interior castle of our hearts. So on March 30th, before voicing his own requests, St. Joseph spoke of this first duty which comes before all others.

“It is time. Kneel my beloved daughter, for God is about to reveal to you a secret of the interior life. Few there are who learn it, and fewer they who live it in its fullness. This SECRET, dear child, is living with Him Who is within you and has made of your soul His Kingdom. There are many who know this Doctrine, but few to whom God reveals its secret operation. Few souls there are who empty themselves of all things that they may possess this SECRET OF SECRETS, this ultimate glory of all living, this union with the Divine, ending in Eternal Vision.

This Secret cannot be written, lovely child. Its deepest meaning will be made known to you in the interior depths of your child-like soul, in your humble heart, where LOVE has found Its resting place, Its palace beautiful. They who would possess for themselves this mysterious working of the Divine Secret must strive to cultivate in *silence* and *humility* this love for the Eternal Being within them. We [the Holy Family] lived this life, beloved child, so to attain it, souls must imitate as far as possible the fullness of our union with The Indwelling God.”

Awe is the only fitting attitude in the Presence of God and what awe and reverence, what silence must have reigned in that home where God’s Presence was too great for our words. The atheists chide us that if we truly believed it is Jesus, Son of the living God, on our altars and in our tabernacles, we would crawl down the aisle before the Eucharist or toward the Real Presence. Our blessed Lady, Mother of the Son and Spouse of the Spirit, lived every moment imbued with that Real Presence; hence, it should not surprise us that Blessed Anne Catherine Emmerich would speak of Mary serving Jesus, her Lord, on her knees. Or of Joseph giving the fruit of his day’s labor to someone else in greater need, placing all their own needs in the hands of Jesus. Can we not imagine Jesus delighting to allow his divinity to come into play to meet their needs, working little miracles for them, out of the sight of men, when necessity called for it? Could He refuse His Mother and His earthly Father anything when their every need was so evident to His gaze? To be with Jesus is to be in heaven as Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity would say, for Jesus is God and God is heaven. God is simple and divine love is simple, for it gives and it receives; reciprocity is its nature. God gives Himself to us in Jesus and Jesus calls Himself a Beggar for love, for He seeks our love so He can give us, along with Himself, back to God, mirroring the constant exchange of love that is the inner life of the Heavenly Trinity.

Let us, then, get down on our knees and pray with Sister Mildred for a deeper experience of God's Indwelling Presence.

Prayer to the Indwelling Most Holy Trinity

O my Love, my only Good, Most Holy Trinity, I adore You, hidden in the depths of my soul. To You, to Your honor and glory, I dedicate my life. May every thought, word and deed of mine be an act of adoration and praise directed towards Your Divine Majesty enthroned in my heart.

O Father, Infinite Goodness, behold Your child, clothed in the likeness of Your Son. Extend to me Your arms that I may belong to You forever.

O Son, Divine Lord, made man, crucify me with Yourself that I may become, in union with You, a sacrifice of praise for the glory of Your Father.

O Holy Spirit, Fire of Everlasting Love, consume me on the altar of Divine Charity, that at the end of life, nothing may remain but that which bears the likeness of Christ.

O Blessed Trinity, worthy of all adoration, I wish to remain in spirit on my knees, to acknowledge forever Your reign in me and over me, to Your everlasting glory.

Through the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the pure heart of St. Joseph, I consecrate my life to Your adoration and glory.

At the moment of death, receive me, O my Triune Love, that I may continue my adoration of love through all eternity. Amen. (200 days)

Nihil Obstat: ---- Daniel Pilarczyk, S.T.D.
Imprimatur: ----- †Paul F. Leibold, V.G.
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