

The 53rd Anniversary of Our Lady of America®

The Message and the Messenger

From the beginning of time every prophecy, every vision, throughout the centuries, will have its fulfillment in Our Lady of America and her message of the Indwelling Trinity living in every soul, which will renew the whole world and destroy Lucifer and all the evil spirits in the fight he is making against the Indwelling Trinity. This will eventually destroy him.

(Our Lady's conversation with Sister Mildred as told to and recorded by Mary Ziegman, August 30, 1995.)

September 26th, 2009, marked the 53rd anniversary of the first appearance of Our Lady of America® to Sister Mildred (Mary Ephrem) Neuzil, a humble nun in the congregation of the Sisters of the Precious Blood of Jesus in Dayton, Ohio.

Sister was born to Austrian parents, John and Anna (Smerda) Neuzil on August 2, 1916, the first American born of their children, and was named Mildred Marie. She was baptized in Holy Trinity Church in Brooklyn, New York, and lived her early years in Our Lady of Good Counsel parish, Cleveland, Ohio. In Austria her father had been a gardener for Johann Strauss. On September 12, 1930, at age 14, Mildred entered the Sisters of the Precious Blood of Jesus in Dayton, Ohio and on August 15, 1933 she took first vows, receiving the name Sister Mary Ephrem which means "doubly fruitful." On August 15, 1939 she took perpetual vows and lived those vows until the day she died, January 10, 2000.



*Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil
2 Aug 1916 - 10 Jan 2000*

Already in 1938 Sister began to have mystical experiences which she thought were common to all religious. By the early 1940's, in locutions with Our Lord and Our Lady, she came to understand that **her mission was to converge on the sanctification of the family.** By 1954 these experiences took on the nature of a **specific program of special devotion to Mary** which she was commanded to propagate. These have been recorded in her **private, copyrighted Diary as OUR LADY OF AMERICA®.**

In preparation for Our Lady's apparition **St. Michael, Angel of Peace**, appeared to Sister Mary Ephrem in 1954. St. Michael presented her with the sword with which to do battle with the world, self and the devil; the cross for the suffering she would be

asked to bear for souls; and the palm, sign of her victory over Satan. Because of **Satan's hatred for the Divine Indwelling Trinity** and, therefore, for her who was chosen to bring this message to us, Sister was under frequent attack. God graciously sent St. Michael to be her constant companion, along with a host of other angels. It is St. Michael who protects the Pope and the Church, God's people. Since Our Lady has given a **divine mandate to America, the United States of America**, to lead the world in an urgently needed **reform of life**, she sends St. Michael to lead us in our own renewal so we can help her bring all other nations **back to Faith and Purity** as she desires.

In 1955, **St. Gabriel, that Angel of Purity**, assured Sister that Our Lord was pleased with her effort to do good and counseled her to go to the Mother of Jesus to learn great purity of heart which is so pleasing to Him. It is such purity, as is evident in the beauty of Mary and her Immaculate Conception, that is our inspiration for imitation and transformation and which will lead us to Jesus and salvation. A call to return to **purity of life in heart, mind, body and soul** is at the heart of this message.

Then, in the fall of 1956, Sister was assigned to **Kneipp Springs, Rome City, IN**, for the second time and only for a few short months. She was overwhelmed with the feeling that she was **"in a ring of evil;"** she felt like jumping out the window to get away, but she couldn't. She asked her superiors if she could leave, but she could find no replacement and had to stay. She had an intense physical attack from Satan there. But, on the **eve of the North American martyrs, September 25, 1956**, while in chapel, **Our Lady appeared to her as Our Lady of Lourdes**. Knowing that the blood of martyrs is the seed of Faith, and that there are no accidents with God, we see in this date for Our Lady's first appearance a confirmation of **the religious heritage of America, sealed in the blood of its martyrs who were so devoted to her and her Immaculate Conception**, a religious heritage so many today try to deny and eliminate from our history and experience. Three of these eight holy Jesuits were martyred in upstate New York while the other 5 were martyred in Canada.



The fact that Mary first appeared as Our Lady of Lourdes is evidence of the pleasure we give Our Lady by honoring her as our Patroness under the title she revealed to St. Bernadette in Lourdes, "I am the Immaculate Conception." **Later Sister Mary Ephrem would be spiritually transported to Lourdes and would meet Bernadette as a young peasant girl.** Seeing a ladder ascending into heaven, Sister wanted to climb it, but Bernadette indicated she still had much work to do. That ladder is a symbol of our hunger for God that

is the joy of the Indwelling Presence of the Most Holy Trinity, source of all holiness and peace., and of God's constant condescension to us in the Sacred Humanity of Jesus.

The following day, the feast itself, **September 26, 1956, Our Lady** appeared twice to Sister under a new image and **identified herself as "Our Lady of America®"** and expressed her desire that her children in America honor her by the purity of their lives. Later **she requested that America be the country dedicated to her Purity.**

On **October 5, 1956**, Sister was compelled to write the **words to the Prayer to the Immaculate Conception.** Then on **November 15**, of that year, **Our Lady asked Sister to draw a picture of her first appearance and requested that a statue be made according to this likeness and be placed, after being carried in solemn procession, in the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC. She wishes to be honored there as "Our Lady of America, the Immaculate Virgin®."**

This is my shrine, my daughter. I am very pleased with it. Tell my children I thank them. Let them finish it quickly and make it a place of pilgrimage. It will be a place of wonders. I promise this. I will bless all those who, either by prayers, labor or material aid, help to erect this shrine. (Diary, pg. 14)

The picture shown above is Sister Mary Ephrem's own original drawing depicting Our Lady as she saw her. The lines are straight and simple, unconfused and without frill, as is the message. The smile is engaging as befits a Mother's love for her children. On **November 22-23, 1957**, Our Lady came in a different image, transparent with the Divine Light being diffused from within her. On her breast was the Triangle and the Eye, symbols for the Blessed Trinity, and above her head a scroll that read, "All the glory of the King's daughter is within." She called herself at this appearance, "**Our Lady of the Divine Indwelling, handmaid of Him Who dwells within.©**" Here Our Lady shows us how the Divine Indwelling Presence will sanctify and fill us, too, with the glory of God from within, emanating outward in a magnificent kind of transparency and heavenly purity.

In the few years following the appearance of Our Lady of America®, Sister had more visits from both Our Lady and St. Joseph, asking for the renewal of the family through imitation of the simple virtues of the Holy Family at Nazareth where Jesus was the center of their lives and where they lived in the Presence of God, a paradise on earth. **St. Joseph** would especially speak to **fathers on their role in the family**, and to all of us on **obedience to the laws of society**, provided they are not contrary to God's laws, and on **obedience to the laws of our religious faith.** He asked to be **honored on the first Wednesday** of each month **with the recitation of the rosary and the Joyful mysteries** in honor of his life on earth with Jesus and Mary. He spoke of his role as **co-redeemer with Jesus and Mary in the silence of his heart**, and of his

being *cleansed from original sin the moment after his conception* in deference to **Our Lady's greater singular privilege of being *preserved from original sin from the first moment of her conception***. Our Lady spoke about the importance of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, and about prayer, particularly the family rosary. St. Joseph spoke of his protection of the Pope, the Church and of the family, stating that the peace of the world is in the hands of the Holy Family.

In **September of 1958, Sister Mary Ephrem entered Our Lady of the Nativity Cloister** begun within the active order and located in **New Riegel, Ohio**. From there she continued her mission. In 1960 **Bishop Paul F. Leibold, Sister's spiritual director**, helped her organize her Diary for easy reading and wrote the forward. The Diary was then presented only to the necessary superiors for private review. In **1961 Bishop Leibold put his imprimatur on the medal**, drawn to Sister's exact specifications, **then had the medal struck with the approval of Bishop George J. Rehring of Toledo, Ohio, the diocese of authority** where Sister resided. In **1963 Bishop Leibold put his imprimatur on the beautiful Prayer to the Indwelling Most Holy Trinity** and began distribution of the medal and prayer leaflets, which also included the Prayer to the Immaculate Conception. In **1972 Archbishop Leibold, Sister's spiritual director for the past 32 years, died, and she lost her greatest supporter. Fr. Edmund Morman would become the new advocate for the cause.**

Following the death of Archbishop Leibold the cloister was advised by a number of priests and nuns to request separation from the active group in order to retain their contemplative vocation, which was being terribly compromised by the rapid changes within the active order. So on **December 12, 1977, the seven cloistered sisters advised the Mother Superior of their desire to separate and sent that request and the request to retain their vows to Rome**. A great deal of conflict and persecution ensued and all but three of the seven left the group, two returning to the active group and two to lay life. The "**little trinity**" of faithful souls remained to suffer for this cause when few people wanted to believe in Our Lady of America® and preferred to call these sisters "crazy."

Amidst the politics and delays from Rome, the three remaining sisters got lost in the shuffle. Neither the community itself nor their own diocese would help them obtain due process in their difficulty, or guide them in reorganization when they pleaded for help. **Fr. Edmund Morman, Sister's new spiritual director, appealed to the Toledo diocese on their behalf and was turned away**. They were abandoned, like Jesus, by their own who should have helped them. Can one doubt that a grave injustice and lack of charity occurred here? **The foundress, Sister Mary Florecita, died of a heart attack**, likely brought on by the stress and persecution. Sister Mary Ephrem, now using her baptismal name, Sister Mildred, and her companion, Sister Joseph Therese, nee Patricia Ann Fuller, were put out on the street by the active group on June 1, 1979 and

the Our Lady of Nativity Convent was sold out from under them with no offer to them to buy it after they had spent \$800,000 on repairing it. Earlier, in **February** of that year and before Sister Florecita's death on April 3rd and well before leaving the convent on June 1st, **Fr. Morman had the three remaining sisters renew their vows for life.** He counseled them: **"You are what you are, contemplative Sisters of the Indwelling Trinity."** He directed them to continue living their lives as contemplative sisters in the hope that **one day a holy bishop would come to help them.** While waiting for approval of their Rule from Rome these three had requested two years of **exclaustration from the active group only, but NO DISPENSATION from their vows.** They requested a third year of exclaustration, as they had not yet found a diocese to accept them because the bishop who had promised to do so believed those false accusations without ever talking to them. The active community refused them additional time. **Superiors from the active group came to the convent and ordered Sister Mildred to sign papers, which she did in obedience, not realizing they were final exclaustration papers until her ring was forcefully taken off her finger by the superior and she was told that she was not allowed to wear the habit.** Her companion, Sister Joseph Therese, nee Patricia Ann Fuller, never signed those papers. From that point on they were exiled and continued to live out their religious life in private vow. We must ask if anyone can be ordered to sign exclaustration under obedience and without full knowledge, or against her will? Can this be in full accord with Canon Law? **This was the greatest cross and suffering Sister Mildred could imagine.**

Relatives of Archbishop Leibold, her spiritual director from 1940 – 1972 when he died, **gave the two sisters a home to live in** as they were given nothing by the community they had served for so many years; even their means of livelihood, the printing press which the cloistered Sisters themselves had procured through a benefactor, was taken from them, as had been a 15 acre property given specifically to them for a future convent by a priest, which the active community took and sold for a fraction of its worth. Our Lady promised Sister she would be given a haven of rest, but not from suffering. In that humble home a benefactor had given them to use, and later in another in the same area **in Fostoria, Ohio, Sister Mildred lived out the remainder of her life, bearing a multitude of physical sufferings until she died on January 10, 2000.** **Her funeral Mass was held at the Basilica of Our Lady of Consolation in Carey, Ohio. How fitting!** A few days before she died she was overjoyed to hear that a group of Mary's devoted children from the Reparation Society in Baltimore had arranged a Mass at the National Shrine in Washington, D.C. for the very first day of the Third Millennium, which was also the First Saturday of January, and had crowned a statue of Mary with white roses, proclaiming her Our Lady, Queen of Americans.

The overwhelming focus of this message is, of course, the Divine Indwelling in every soul which is the true source of purity of life and which is the central doctrine of our Faith. It is this Divine Indwelling, this purity, that Our Lady told

Sister would be the instrument of renewal throughout the whole world and the weapon that would destroy Satan. She especially called on the **youth of America to be her “Torchbearers of the Queen®”** and to lead in this spiritual renewal of the world by taking this message to the youth of other nations. This is what Our Lady means by **reform of life, sanctification from within**, communion with the God who dwells within. Our Lady says quite clearly that **consecration to her is NOT enough; reform of life is what she asks for, has asked for and will continue to ask for.**

In those early years of Sister’s own exile in 1980 and 1981, when under the direction of the holy priest, Fr. Edmund Morman, Our Lady came repeatedly to Sister, lamenting that her children are still not listening to her warnings and her pleadings and are not accepting the grace she holds out to them. **In these later messages Our Lady and Our Lord outline the errors of our day that must be addressed:** spiritual blindness, intellectual pride, preference for the trinkets of life over God, materialism and externalism, lack of discernment of spirits, disobedience to Christ’s Vicar on earth, false teachings, false messiahs, the error of calling unnatural deeds done in the name of love inalienable rights, repudiation of the Holy Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, the refusal to sacrifice, failure to abide in the Holy Spirit, the sins of the tongue, non acceptance of the little ones, and a love that is not all inclusive. We certainly have a great deal of reforming to do! Our dear Lord and Our Lady have made that very clear. There is no room for compromise on **the reform of life they ask for as a sign and proof of our love for them and as a prerequisite to any enthronement if it is to be a sign of true devotion.**

From this final message, I received the very strong impression that Our Lady was telling us that She had done everything She could do to help and warn us. Now it was up to us. Whatever happens we will have brought on ourselves so whatever we decide and do now is our responsibility. (Diary, pgs. 45-46)

My daughter, will my children in America listen to my pleadings and console my Immaculate Heart? Will my loyal sons carry out my desires and thus help me bring the peace of Christ once again to mankind? (Diary, pg.15)

Our Lady, however, will not forsake us because we are Her children and She loves us. (Diary, pg. 46)

When will we listen to our Mother’s pleadings and console her Immaculate Heart?

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