

The Will of God Must Be Dearer than All Else We Must Obey God, Not Man

“My poor child, you have suffered much, but do not fear. Take courage, for soon a haven of rest will be given you—not a refuge from suffering and pain, but a nest of solitude for the little white dove, so dear to me and the Heart of my Son. Patience, sweet child! The Will of the Father must be dearer to you than all else. This is the lesson every soul desiring intimate union with my Son must strive to learn.”

(Sister Mildred (Mary Ephrem) Neuzil, Diary, OUR LADY OF AMERICA®, Fostoria, Ohio, Page 19.)

The Will of God! It must be dearer to us than all else if we desire to live in intimate union with the Divine Indwelling Presence of God. On August 22, 1957, feast of the Immaculate Heart, Our Lady of America® spoke these words to Sister Mildred (Mary Ephrem) Neuzil whom Our Lord called His little white dove in recognition of His divine espousal with her. She loved Him with her whole heart and mind and soul. She embraced His Will with complete surrender as she accepted His cross and His crown of thorns and the invitation to share in His redemptive mission for the salvation of souls. The Hebrew Scriptures speak of God’s covenant, His espousal with His people, Israel. The Christian Scriptures, moreover, speak of Christ’s espousal with His Bride, His Church, the people of the New Covenant through Baptism into Christ Who comes with the Most Holy Trinity to dwell within us through His redeeming and sanctifying grace. This grace is a participation in God’s own divine nature, a holy communion with God. Since Christ is wed to His Church collectively, so is He wed to each individual member as He draws us into deeper and deeper union with God, deeper espousal, in preparation for the great wedding banquet of the Lamb that is heaven. The depth of our espousal to God corresponds to the depth of our response of love to His Love. In heaven we will be like the angels, with glorified bodies like spirit beings. There is no sex and no marriage in heaven, so divine espousal is about a more perfect love and union with God in heart and mind and soul. We are bound to God and do not exist apart from Him by His choice in the act of creation. We are bound to God and have no eternal life or lasting happiness apart from Him by our choice in the work of our redemption and sanctification.

The Baltimore Catechism answered so simply and so profoundly the question, “Why did God make me?” **“He made me to know Him, to love Him, to serve Him in this world and to be happy with Him forever in the next.”** Sacred Scripture tells us God so loved the world that He sent us His own Son to make His dwelling place among us in our own flesh, to make perfect atonement for our sins in order to reconcile us with the Father, and to give us the grace of His Divine Indwelling Presence so we might experience something of heaven in our hearts and in our world already here on earth. **“Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”** (Mt 6:10) This is the Will of God, that all men be saved and enjoy eternal union with Him. No one knows better how to achieve our salvation and happiness than He Who has written so deeply in our hearts and in our very nature that hunger for Himself without Whom we anguish, forever in darkness and despair, seeking happiness everywhere but where it is truly to be found. We foolishly think some human person can be our savior, but there is only one Savior of the world, Jesus Christ. There is only one God, our Holy Triune God Who alone can satisfy our

heart's desire, for He made us for Himself and our hearts are restless until they rest in Him.

Evil Is Opposition to the Will of God

God does not, cannot, create evil, nor does He cause it. It is a non entity, an **absence of goodness**, the result of the rejection of God as He truly is, Lord and Creator of all. In Mark 10:18, Jesus says, "**No one is good except God alone.**" So we ask, can we be or do anything good apart from God or in opposition to His Will? That Will is expressed for us in the Natural and the Moral Law God has authored for our good, for He can only will and do what is good for us and be true to His own nature. Evil results when we lie to ourselves and usurp His authority and pass laws contrary to His, as though we were god and had his authority. There can be no disorder or imperfection in God, so His laws extol perfect harmony and order in our nature, toward Him, toward ourselves and toward others. God is one with His Will, with His Word, so opposition to His laws is opposition to Him and to all that is good. Opposition to God results in behaviors that are disordered and destructive--evil--precisely because they are rejection of the True and Eternal Good, the **absence of good**. Many define our current culture as immoral, a "culture of death." It might be better defined as an **evil culture** suffering intensely from that age old **opposition disorder** to the supreme authority of God over every person and every nation that began with Lucifer's "Non Servio." Humanity has been swayed ever since by Satan's lies, that little twist of the Truth that sounds so good and tricks the human mind to perceive evil as good. God made the human will to choose the good; hence, the mind must present evil to the will as "good" in order for the will to embrace it. The will cannot choose evil, for it is a negative, an absence, a non-entity, but the will can choose a partial truth or false good which is really a rejection of the whole Truth and pure Goodness, therefore, a rejection of God. There can be no human right to what is intrinsically evil or contrary to our nature, unnatural acts, acts in opposition to God, Goodness Itself and the source of all human rights. God alone is the author of life and therefore the Lord of life. He is the boss; He makes the rules. He alone has designed the universe and all creation and the laws that govern them, and He alone can change them, but He never will, for change implies imperfection. He is Perfection, Eternally Present, without time and unchanging. When man attempts to change God's laws or redefine man's nature, he is committing the ultimate denial of God's existence and nature and supreme authority; he is acting as if he were god and has the right to make the laws governing our nature. One might say it is a violation of divine copyright, the fraud of all frauds. Jesus warns us about this terrible error when He says:

Many unnatural acts [our emphasis] are being committed in the name of love. This evil is being disguised and tolerated as an intrinsic right like any other. Even some of My priests and consecrated virgins are being caught up into this web of evil, not realizing its terrible consequences.

My dearest one, many false doctrines are being taught and for many the true Christ is never made known. The false prophets and self-proclaimed Messiahs are drawing many away from Me, the Way, the Truth and the Life. I am the true Messiah who was sent and the only one proclaimed as such by My Father. Seek Me for I only am truth, I only am the Christ." (Diary, Pg. 40, July 13, 1981.)

God has given us free will precisely so we would be able to **choose to love Him**; without choice we would be slaves. For that same reason, He will never force Himself upon us as human demigods and dictators do. Our secular world deifies man and human reason and human wisdom and foolishly embraces its own destruction by standing in opposition to God, to Eternal Truth, to Infinite Goodness. Can anything be more contrary to the intelligence God gave us than to deny our own inmost desire and the destiny for which we were created; to reject the only One Who can make us truly happy? Or to reject God's laws and God's Will when He is Creator and Lord? Is life the **pursuit of pleasure or the pursuit of happiness?** We have a choice. Let us heed Christ's words to Sister Mildred in July of 1954: **"...Choose, and as you choose, so shall it be done. I will not force your free will, for that is yours to use as you desire."** (Diary, Pg. 7.)

In our opening passage Our Lady revealed the intimate relationship of doing the Will of God with living in the Divine Indwelling Presence of God, union with Christ and with the Most Holy Trinity. Grace always comes first; God is Eternal Lover and we are the beloved made in His image and filled with His Presence so we may love as He loves. Holy Scripture records Jesus' teaching and example that our happiness lies in doing the Will of the Father. Both He and His dear Mother have shown us so simply how to live in the Divine Will, in the Divine Presence, and thereby begin to enjoy heaven on earth.

"I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. (Jn 6:38) "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work." (Jn 4:34) : "My Father, if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done!" (Mt 26:42)

"Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." (Mt 6:9-10) "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." (Mt 7:21)

On hearing the words Archangel Gabriel spoke to her of things totally impossible to man, Mary believed that all things are possible with God and that His Word fulfills its Promise, and so she replied: **"Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done to me according to your word."** Is Mary's prayer of surrender to the Will of God also our prayer?

We Must Obey God, Not Man

No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will stand by the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. (The Holy Bible, Catholic Action Edition, Mt 6:24)

Doing the will of God carries with it the call to martyrdom. The red martyrdom of blood is the actual gift of our lives in order to give testimony to our belief in God and His supreme authority over us, as the life of Jesus shows. A white martyrdom of love is the complete surrender of our lives to God's love, allowing Him to do with us as He wills by removing all barriers to the action of grace within us, as Mary did, and as Sister Mildred did. True discipleship entails one or the other martyrdom; we cannot serve two masters, nor can we love halfway. In the Book of Revelation we read:

I know thy works; thou art neither cold nor hot. I would that thou wert cold or hot. But because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to vomit thee out of my mouth; ... (The Holy Bible, Catholic Action Edition, Rev 3:15-22)

Lukewarmness and mediocrity are offensive to a God Who gives His all to us. It was St. Stephen, the first red martyr of Christ's Church, who spoke with the fervor of the early Church and the elegance of the Holy Spirit his famed discourse against those who rejected Christ, concluding, **"We must obey God, not man!"** As he gave testimony to Jesus' Resurrection, the heavens opened and he saw Jesus at the right hand of the Father in all his resurrection glory. The unbelievers stoned him but Stephen's soul was released into that everlasting glory that is our only true happiness.

How often those who glorify their own will rationalize that we cannot know God's Will; He doesn't send us angels to tell us what to do. Or they regard the Scriptures as the mere musings of men. Ah, no mere man could author such mystery and divine wisdom and grace! It **transcends** human reason. But God is also **immanent**; He has revealed Himself to us, written His laws in our very nature and on tablets of immutable stone, and has spoken His Word of love to us in Jesus, the Way, the Truth and the Life. These revelations are concrete and verifiable in our history and experience. God has espoused His people to Himself in Jesus and Jesus has espoused Himself to His Bride, the Church that He founded as the Sacrament of His Divine Presence in our midst. He has entrusted His Revelation to His Church and given His Church His own authority to interpret and defend that Divine Revelation for us. His is the only Church that bears the promise that it will endure until the end of time. It is our Ark of safety against the storms of error and sin.

In the 1980's Our Lady addressed this shared divine authority within the Church.

"Beloved daughter, sweet child, there are those in high places in the Church who disobey and refuse respect to my Son's Vicar on earth. These betray the teachings inspired by the Divine Spirit sent by my Son to be with the Church 'til the end of time.

There are those who teach false doctrines, and those who repudiate the Holy Sacraments. They are filled with intellectual pride. And so refusing to follow my humble Son, they are being destroyed together with those who misguidedly follow them down the path of error and falsehood. Pray for these poor ones who do not realize the misery and wretchedness they are in and to which they have and are leading others." (Diary, Pg. 43.)

Our Lord and Our Lady both addressed the subtle way that evil works in our culture and called us to a purity of heart that will recognize evil for what it is.

"Dear child, evil is so insidious that it often passes for good. The simple and pure of heart alone can detect the difference. Many good works and many a good person or persons are thwarted and destroyed by apparently good people who are manipulated by the powers of evil because they do not possess that finer sense of being able to detect a false spirit from a true one." (Holy Saturday, April 18, 1981, Diary, Pg. 40.)

Christ's present Vicar on earth, Pope Francis, addresses the way of evil as well.

The tempter is sly: he doesn't push us directly toward evil, but toward a false good, making us believe that power and that which satisfies our basic needs are the true realities. In this way, God becomes secondary; he is reduced to a means, becomes unreal, no longer counts, disappears. In the final analysis, faith is what is at stake in temptation because God is at stake.

In the decisive moments of our lives, but on closer inspection in every moment, we are faced with a choice: do we want to follow the "I" or God? Do we want to seek out our selfish interests or the true God...?

(Matthew Brunson, POPE FRANCIS, Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, Pg. 47.)

Sister Mildred Neuzil had such a pure heart. She saw evil for what it was and she knew beyond a doubt that her happiness was secure in doing the will of God. When Jesus offered her His cross and crown of thorns, she told her spiritual director, "**How could I refuse Him anything?**" We would do well to ponder and pray with Sister Mildred in the communion of saints the prayer she wrote on Trinity Sunday, 1947, to praise the Divine Will and to plead for its transforming power in our own lives.

Aspirations to the Divine Will

Will of God, I adore You.

Will of God, I love You.

Will of God, I dedicate myself to You.

Will of God, let me lose myself in You.

Will of God, rule my life.

Will of God, teach me.

Will of God, sanctify me.

Will of God, be my peace.

Will of God, be the light of my life.

Will of God, be my refuge in trouble.

Will of God, may You always be accomplished in me.

Will of God, uphold my frailty.

Will of God, transform me.

Will of God, be my joy in life and my consolation in death.

Will of God, I offer myself as Your victim.

Will of God, bear me to heaven.

Will of God, I embrace You as Jesus did in the Garden and in union with Him I offer my life for souls.

O Holy Trinity, One God, I beseech You, deprive me of all things if it be Your Will but deprive me not of Yourself. For You are my Life, and if You are lost to me, death will be my portion. For without You, O Divine Presence, there can be no life, only death. For you are the true Life of the soul. How can there be any life without You, the Author of life? When You make known, in a special manner, Your Divine Presence within me I become so enraptured as to forget all things of earth, being completely carried away by the sweetness and strength of Your love. Continue then, to live in me, O Trinity Divine, as You lived in the burning Heart of Christ, Your Son, the God-man, that my heart too, like His, may be consumed in the fires of Eternal Charity. Amen

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