

# I Became, in Union with My Holy Spouse, Co-redemptor of the Human Race

## *St. Joseph's Service to the Incarnation and Redemptive Mysteries and His Compassion for the Sorrows of Jesus and Mary*

"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 Ephrem) Neuzil, The Diary, OUR LADY OF AMERICA, Tiffin, Ohio, Page 13, locution with St. Joseph, early October, 1956, about a week after Our Lady's first appearance.)

Surely anyone who knows of Our Lady of America also knows of the study done under the leadership of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of the Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana diocese, published May 7, 2020, with signatures of five other bishops in dioceses where Our Lady, Jesus, St. Joseph, St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and the angels over America had appeared or spoken to Sr. Mildred (Mary Ephrem) Neuzil. The study was done by theologians from Notre Dame University, but we do not know who provided the material for the study, how many theologians were involved, if any were laymen or women, or what their levels of expertise in the fields of Mariology, Josephology and mystical theology are. We do not have a copy of their study for discernment. The letter issued by Bishop Rhoades states:

In November 2017, His Eminence, Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, then-USCCB President, received instructions from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith that the competent ecclesiastical authority for conducting the investigation should be the local bishop of the diocese where the alleged apparitions and private revelations occurred, or another bishop who demonstrates such competence. The lead bishop who conducts the investigation was to arrive at a first conclusion. In doing so, he was instructed to call upon whatever assistance was deemed necessary, although the enlistment of one or two experts in Mariology, along with experts in the field of spiritual theology, was highly encouraged, so the authenticity of the presumed mystical phenomena could be established.

This paragraph makes some important points. The competent ecclesiastical authority for conducting the investigation should be the local bishop where the alleged private revelations took place. Let it be known that these revelations took place in 11 or more different locations. Sister Mary Ephrem was only in Rome City in 1956 for several months, as she was in three (3) different locations in 1956. She dreaded the assignment

to Rome City and came under great attack by Satan there; she felt like she was in a ring of evil. According to Rev. Walter M. Abbott, S.J., editor of the Vatican II documents and advisor to the Contemplative Sisters before Sr. Mildred's death in 2000, these **multiple locations** are very important in showing the **national character and focus of these apparitions**. Thus, we must ask, who does Our Lady mean when she tells Sister Mildred (Mary Ephrem) Neuzil to tell the **Bishops of the United States, her loyal sons**, of her desires? How many bishops? One? Six? All? **Her desire is to be enthroned in her Shrine, the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. where she wishes to be honored as Our Lady of America, the Immaculate Virgin, our National Shrine and Patronal Church.** Our Lady clearly states:

**"Tell the Bishops of the United States, my loyal sons, of my desires and how I wish them to be carried out. ... Will my loyal sons carry out my desires and thus help me bring the peace of Christ once again to mankind?" (The Diary, Page 15.)**

With all due respect, let us recognize that the first bishops of competence had been Archbishop Paul F. Leibold of the Cincinnati archdiocese, Sister Mildred's spiritual director from 1940 to 1972, diocese of the Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, and Bishop George J. Rehring, the Toledo, Ohio diocese where Sister Mildred spent the last forty-two years of her life, from 1958 when she entered the Our Lady of Nativity Cloister in New Riegel, Ohio, until her death in Fostoria, Ohio, January 10, 2000. The paragraph states that the lead bishop was to arrive at a first conclusion, which implies there could be a second conclusion, a re-evaluation of this study. It says assistance from one or two experts in the fields of Mariology and spiritual theology should be enlisted so the authenticity of the mystical experiences could be established. There was no mention of experts in the field of Josephology, even though St. Joseph's reference to being a co-redeemer was called error. Who compiled the information for the study? Who are the Notre Dame theologians and what level of expertise in any of these fields do they have? They called St. Joseph as co-redemptor error simply because it has never been expressed as Catholic doctrine. Consider how long Mary's utter sinlessness was believed before the doctrine of her Immaculate Conception, implicit in Sacred Scripture, was proclaimed a dogma of Faith by Blessed Pius IX on December 8, 1854.

**Regarding the alleged revelations themselves, much of what is expressed does not contain any doctrinal error. However, there is a claim regarding Saint Joseph which has never been expressed as Catholic doctrine and must be seen as an error, namely, that he was a "co-redeemer" with Christ for the salvation of the world.**

In Sr. Mildred's Diary St. Joseph refers to himself as co-redemptor with Jesus and Mary in the salvation of the world through foreknowledge of and compassion for their intense sufferings, their passions. Calling St. Joseph's statement error begs for further discussion, especially from experts in the field of Josephology. Internationally recognized Mariologist and Josephologist, Msgr. Arthur B. Calkins, wrote an 18-page response and sent it to the six bishops who signed on to the conclusions of the study. He states that their calling St. Joseph as co-redeemer with Christ an error "is simply not so." He cites St. John Paul II's Apostolic Letter, *Salvifici Doloris*, #24, February 11, 1984.

**The sufferings of Christ created the good of the world's redemption. This good in itself is inexhaustible and infinite. No man can add anything to it. But at the same time, in the mystery of the Church as his Body, Christ has in a sense opened his own redemptive suffering to all human suffering. In so far as man becomes a sharer in Christ's sufferings – in any part**

of the world and at any time in history – to that extent he in his own way completes the suffering through which Christ accomplished the Redemption of the world (Cf. Col. 1:24).<sup>1</sup>

Msgr. Calkins writes about the Gospel of suffering in which we all share in the redemptive work of Christ who became a partaker of our humanity in the Incarnation, God's plan for our salvation, so we might become partakers of His divinity through adoption as sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father. We participate in this redeeming work in varying degrees of co-operation in accord with our vocation in life. None co-operated as intimately and completely as did Mary, Mother of the Redeemer, who said "yes" to God's plan for our salvation and gave Jesus her very flesh and blood to become the only sacrifice that could truly satisfy Divine Justice for the sins of mankind because He was both God and man. No vocation can be as exalted as that of the Mother of the Redeemer. She shared every joy and sorrow of Christ's life from the moment of His conception within her womb to His tortured death on the cross. She was present at the exact moment the salvific event took place on Calvary. Next to Mary and next closest to Jesus is Joseph, Virgin-Father of Jesus and Guardian of the Redeemer and His Mother. Father Stanley Smolenski, another noted Josephologist, states it thus.

**St. Joseph's participation in the sufferings of Christ, the requirement to have that second seat, [in the kingdom of heaven] was by having the main responsibility for the King and Queen in the mysteries of the Passion of the Infant Jesus: Jesus was hunted by Herod's army to kill him. Joseph suffered the anxiety and distress for the child's and his mother's safety and survival from Bethlehem, into Egypt, and even in Nazareth. Joseph was told to flee immediately to Egypt, which did not give them time to do much preparing. They arrived in Egypt unexpectedly. Joseph was told to wait until told to return to the Holy Land. Imagine his dilemma: does he buy or rent a house? Should he take long or short-term jobs? The message to return did not come today; will it be tomorrow? Such was his daily cross to which he had to abandon himself and trust. [Father states further:]**

**St. Joseph's next dilemma came when he was told to return to the Holy Land. It is obvious that he wanted to settle in Bethlehem because of the prophecy stating that the Messiah would come from there. There were also two benefits. There would be no scarcity of work since Jerusalem was being built to be a wonder of the world. Also, his extended family would be his social security according to that culture. But the difficulty was the age of Jesus. In Bethlehem Jesus would be the only boy in that age range because all the others were massacred by Herod when the Magi unexpectedly arrived in Jerusalem inquiring about the Infant King of the Jews. The new king Archelaus was as vicious as his father. Kings had spies to detect any plots to overthrow their power. The fact of Jesus being that age would surely not go unnoticed and would be reported to the king. So Joseph recalled the prophecy, yet realized the jeopardy of the situation. The Angel resolved this by directing him to leave Bethlehem in Judea and go to Nazareth in distant Galilee as the safe haven for them, a region not under the jurisdiction of Archelaus, but his meeker brother. Joseph had to keep Jesus and Mary, the King and Queen, hidden, safely undercover, as it were, from their potential enemies in Jerusalem. And so Joseph's life was filled with anxieties due to these constant uncertainties and insecurities. In this way we see that the future of the kingdom of Christ depended on St. Joseph's reliability to respond faithfully in these circumstances.**

**[With respect to the Presentation of Jesus in the temple:] "instead of the reclamation of the first-born, what happens is that Jesus is publicly handed over to God, his Father" in the sacred Temple of sacrifice. St. Joseph's parental participation united him with this official offering of Jesus in the Temple – to be fulfilled in Jesus' immolation on Calvary in the presence of Mary.**

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(Rev. Stanley Smolenski, "St. Joseph's Importance in the Gospel.")

Msgr. Calkins develops the Principle of Collaboration and subordination in varying degrees within the Hypostatic Order of Grace, the earthly trinity of the Holy Family, showing how Mary and Joseph share in the redemptive mission of Jesus as no others, but in a descending order of grace. St. Joseph's role as co-redeemer was precisely in his vocation as Virgin-Father and Guardian of the Redeemer and Mary, Mother of the Redeemer. It was his duty to keep hidden the divinity of Jesus and the divine maternity and perpetual virginity of Mary until God's appointed time when the Eternal Father would proclaim His own Divine Paternity over His beloved Son. It was not in the will of God that St. Joseph, shadow of the Eternal Father, should be present physically on Calvary. We can trust that St. Joseph, as father to the Redeemer and Spouse of the Spouse of the Holy Spirit, was granted many insights into the redemptive mystery that was unfolding every day of their lives in the most intimate communion of these three persons vowed and consecrated solely to God's purpose for the salvation of mankind. Imagine the anguish Joseph carried in his heart from the moment he heard Simeon's prophecy that a sword would pierce Mary's heart. It was a cross he would carry every day of his life as he worried about what was to befall her and Jesus. No doubt, St. Joseph suffered in **anticipation** of the salvific event; Mary suffered by her **presence at the salvific event**, in time; and we unite our suffering with that saving event, **after the fact**, but in communion with it in that one moment in time that is made present to us on every sacrificial altar where Holy Mass is celebrated throughout time. In that sense, we are all mystically present on Calvary.

The Hypostatic Order of Grace is that unique order of grace in which only three persons participate in carrying out God's plan for the salvation of the world. The first person is Jesus Himself, the Redeemer; second but subordinate to Him is Mary, Mother of the Redeemer; and the third person, subordinate to and at the service of Jesus and Mary is St. Joseph, guardian and protector of the Redeemer and His Mother from the hatreds of the world that would attempt to destroy Christ before His mission could be accomplished. So silent, so humble and so hidden a life, but oh so noble and important a participation in our salvation! Without Joseph, the boy Jesus might well have died at Herod's bloody hands and we would have no Savior. To reap the full benefits of Msgr. Calkins expert defense of St. Joseph as Co-redemptor, please read his response to the Bishops' study in its entirety at the link below. He quotes Pope Pius XI's statement about St. Joseph.

*It was a unique and sublime mission, that of guarding the Son of God, the King of the world, that of protecting the virginity of Mary, that of entering into participation in the mystery hidden from the eyes of ages and so to cooperate in the Incarnation and the Redemption.*

**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.** (Prayer to the Indwelling Most Holy Trinity.)

<https://www.ourladyofamerica.com/whatsnew/MsgrArthurBCalkinsResponsetotheBishopsStudy.pdf>

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