

In Loving Memory of Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil

January 10, 2022 -- 22nd Anniversary of her Death

Part One – Her Family

“God has no need of anyone, yet He chooses the smallest of the small for His glory. Sweet child, let your humble heart be filled with a great confidence, for my Son is in love with your lowliness and simplicity of heart. Make known to souls the preference my Son has for humility. It is through the most unlikely of instruments that God works His wonders!” (Our Lady to Sister Mildred, taken from her letters.)



Mildred Neuzil as a child

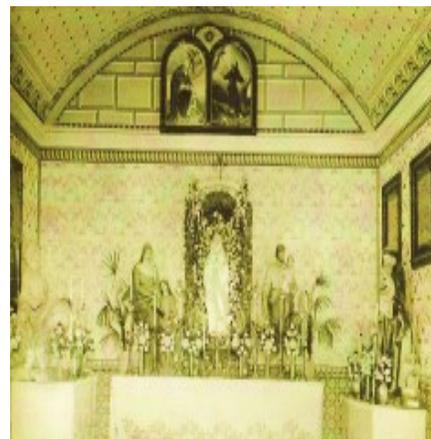
“...It was for this I was born and for this I must spend myself. I will always be a nothing, yet a nothing full of confidence in Him Who chooses the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and the weak things of this world to confound the strong. For it is not right that flesh should glory in His sight. How happy I am to be such a nothing, to be counted as naught. Hide me away, my God, I am only fit to be hidden away in some dark corner, unseen by anyone but You.” (Letter of Sister Mildred Neuzil to her spiritual director.)



*John and Anna Neuzil –
Mildred's Parents*

Oh, how God loves a simple and childlike soul! Mildred Marie was born August 2, 1916, feast of Our Lady of the Angels, to Austrian immigrants, John and Anna (Smerda) Neuzil in Brooklyn, New York. Fittingly, for one chosen to give the world a message on the Divine Indwelling of the Most Holy Trinity, she was baptized at Holy Trinity Church in Brooklyn. Shortly after, the family moved to Our Lady of Good Counsel Church in Cleveland, Ohio. Her father, formerly a gardener for Johann Strauss, became a builder of homes. Mildred's mother had built a chapel in their home in Austria, shown here. Her mother came from a wealthy family, but her father came from an extremely poor family of fifteen boys and one girl. When the family moved to the United States, the mother

gave the property with this chapel to the Church. The chapel depicts the family's great devotion to Our Lady and the saints. Notice Our Lady of Lourdes in the center of the altar (in whose image Our Lady would later make her first appearance to (Sr.) Mildred in 1956, and whose name would become that of our Patroness, the Immaculate Conception). St. Ann with Our Lady is on the left and St. Joseph with the Child Jesus is on the right. (St. Joseph would later reveal to (Sr.) Mildred the “Secret of secrets” of the Divine Indwelling of the Most Holy Trinity. St. Anthony with the Child Jesus, St. Therese, the Little Flower, and an angel grace the side right altar. It is not clear what the left picture above the altar represents, but the right picture above is that of St. Francis receiving the stigmata. That image speaks



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to our Lord's offering His crown of thorns to (Sr.) Mildred to wear, while asking if she would be willing to suffer for souls (after she had entered the convent). When she said "yes", He asked if He could nail her to His cross and lay her on the altar of sacrifice. She refused Him nothing—becoming a victim soul and a perfect example of St. Paul's doctrine of being baptized into the Paschal Mystery of Christ, sharing in His work of redemption, becoming co-redeemers with Him for the salvation of souls, making up for what is lacking in the Mystical Body of Christ.



To the left is a portrait of Mildred's family. Left to right in the top row are Irma and John, Jr. In the bottom row are Geraldine, her father John holding Grace, Mildred in the center, her mother Anna and William on the right. Anna, the second oldest child, is missing in the photo.

The deep faith of her parents greatly influenced Mildred, who had a hunger for spiritual things, as would be evidenced in a few years with her conviction about a vocation, not just to religious life, but to a contemplative life of prayer and solitude and silence. **It became her dream to live a solitary life, totally consecrated to Christ.** No wonder He would enter into a spiritual espousal relationship with her. **"Bride**

of My Heart," Jesus called her.

At age 14, on September 12, 1930, feast of the holy name of Mary, Mildred entered the Sisters of the Precious Blood in Dayton, Ohio. On August 15, 1933, she took first vows and received the name Sister Mary Ephrem, a name which means **"doubly fruitful."** She found the fulfillment of **her dream** when, at last, in May of 1958, she entered the Our Lady of Nativity cloister in New Riegel, Ohio, one of the first settlements for the Sisters of the Precious Blood when they came from Switzerland to work in the Cincinnati archdiocese. **"Cradle of the Community"** they called this settlement.



Sister Mary Ephrem with family at first vows

We will continue reflecting upon Sister Mildred's life in the ensuing newsletters. As for now, let us revel in the blessings obtained from The Year of St. Joseph that just ended December 8, 2021, during which many consecrated themselves to St. Joseph. We may not be aware that Pope Francis had declared a Year of the Family from March 19, 2021 until this coming June 26, 2022 when the 10th World Meeting of Families will take place in Rome. He has also asked that we especially honor Our Lady in 2022.

With our devotion to Our Lady of America, our Patroness, and to the mission of Sister Mildred for the sanctification of the family and of souls through the Divine Indwelling of the Most Holy Trinity, we invite and urge all to consecrate themselves anew, not just to

St. Joseph, our spiritual father, or to Our Lady, our spiritual Mother, but **to the Holy Family as the trinity on earth, the Icon of the Heavenly Trinity and most perfect model of holiness for us.** Family is the key to understanding Christmas, the Incarnation of the Son of God, and it is the key to Christianity, states Scott Hahn in his book, JOY TO THE WORLD: How Christ's Coming Changed Everything (And Still Does).



Carlo Brontti - Toscano

Pope Saint John Paul II noted that everything good—history, humanity, salvation— “passes by way of the family.” When God came to save us, he made salvation inseparable from family life, manifest in family life. Since the family is the ordinary setting of human life, he came to share it, redeem it, and perfect it. He made it an image and sacrament of a divine mystery. Salvation itself finds meaning only in *familial* relations.

God is family, a communion of persons, and He made humankind to be a family in His image and likeness. When our First Family sinned in paradise and brought disorder to the human race, God gave us a new model, the Holy Family. It is through imitation of the Holy Family that our own families will be sanctified. Our Lady spoke thus to Sr. Mildred, as recorded in her Diary, page 8: **“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.”**

Let us consecrate ourselves and our families to the Holy Family in 2022 and pray daily this prayer composed by Fr. Stephen Imbarrato, defender of life, marriage and family!

Prayer to the Holy Family for Protection of Life, Marriage and Family

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, most Holy Family, protect us from all attacks against life, marriage, family, our Faith, and the Church. Send the Holy Spirit down upon us to give us courage, strength, peace and perseverance in this time of extreme trial and tribulation. Strengthen our marriages by protecting spouses with your grace. Protect our families, especially our children, from the wanton attacks of the evil one. Protect the Bride of Christ, His Mystical Body, from all cultural assaults. Be with our families, our spouses, our parents, our children as we stand up for life, marriage, family and our Faith in the hope of eternal salvation in our true home, Heaven. May every family and home be a “Domestica Ecclesia!” In a special way, watch over and protect those who are lacking family or who have no family.

Jesus, source of all life, protect every human life and soul. Mary, Mother of Jesus, protect all women, especially moms and pregnant moms in crisis. Joseph, help men stand up for their wives and families and for the Church. JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH, protect us from all attacks against life, marriage and family. We ask this in Jesus through Mary and Joseph, our Holy Family. Amen.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, we love you. Save souls!

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