

## The 17<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Death of Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil

**God's Choice of a Messenger for Our Times**

***"They Do Not Believe You Because You Are a Small One"***



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

**Consider your own calling, brothers. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. Rather, God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, so that no human being might boast before God.**

(New American Bible, I Corinthians 1:26-30)

January 10, 2017 marks the 17<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil, God's chosen soul to bring us the message of Our Lady of America®, a message that mandates the **United States of America to be The Nation dedicated to her purity and to lead the world to peace.** That peace comes through union with the Divine Indwelling Presence of the Most Holy Trinity in every person through sanctifying grace. The message calls for the renewal of the family and praying the family rosary, for discernment of spirits in confronting the lies of Satan that have overtaken so much of our society and even of our Church. Priests are exhorted to be spiritual leaders, models of self-denial, poverty and poverty of spirit, and to teach reverence for the Eucharist. St. Joseph bids fathers to assume their rightful place of headship in the family and to imitate his humble and obedient faith to the will of God and to the laws of his religion. **Jesus warns of the error of calling unnatural acts, done in the name of love, intrinsic rights like any other.** He warned also of false teachers and false messiahs. He alone is the One sent by God Who has come down from heaven, pre-announced from ancient times, the only Savior of the world. Our Lady's message demands interior renewal and reform of life as the necessary preparation for enthroning her statue as Our Lady of America® in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. This is the Patronal church of the American people and the one shrine in which this devotion is centered, per Our Lady's own words.

So who is this chosen soul? Why did Mary tell Sister that **"my Son is in love with your lowliness"**? Why is humility so necessary for God to work His miracles of grace in our souls? What is God's preference for "little" ones?

Historically, Mildred Neuzil was born shortly before World War I ended and the Fatima apparitions occurred. She was born in Brooklyn, NY, August 2, 1916, to Austrian parents, John and Anna (Smerda) Neuzil, and was baptized, fittingly, at Most Holy Trinity Church in Brooklyn before the family moved to Our Lady of Good Counsel parish in Cleveland, Ohio. At age 14 she entered the active order of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in Dayton, Ohio, and at 17 made her first vows as a professed religious and received the name of Sister Mary Ephrem. **There are no accidents with God; everything is ordained to His purpose.** Sister's first assignment was in Washington, D.C. where Our Lady's message would be centered. Next, Sister was sent to Cincinnati, Ohio, where God had ordained a holy priest, Father Paul Leibold, to be her spiritual director for 32 years until his sudden death in 1972. As early as 1938, Sister Mildred was having mystical experiences and locutions with Jesus which included a special espousal with Him and an understanding that her mission was to converge on the sanctification of the family. On August 15, 1939, she made her final vows.

In the fall of 1956 Sister Mildred was sent briefly to Kneipp Springs, Rome City, Indiana, a place that gave her great foreboding. There Satan inflicted great pain upon her in an attempt to get her to abandon her mission. Significantly, Our Lady appeared there on September 25, 1956, first as Our Lady of Lourdes where she had identified herself to Bernadette as the Immaculate Conception, the title by which we honor her as our Patroness. The next day Mary appeared under the new image of Our Lady of America® and unfolded her message and the mission to America, the United States in particular. On September 27 Our Lady came holding a replica of the world in her hands as she wept over it.

**“My child, I entrust you with this message that you must make known to my children in America. I wish it to be the country dedicated to my purity. The wonders I will work will be the wonders of the soul. They must have faith and believe firmly in my love for them. I desire that they be the children of my Pure Heart. I desire through my children of America, to further the cause of faith and purity among peoples and nations. Let them come to me with confidence and simplicity, and I, their Mother, will teach them to become pure like to my Heart that their own hearts may be more pleasing to the Heart of my Son.”** (Sister Mildred Neuzil, Diary, OUR LADY OF AMERICA®, Fostoria, Ohio, Page 11).

On October 5, 1956, Sister Mildred was inspired to write *The Prayer to the Immaculate Conception*. On October 13, Our Lady appeared holding a replica of the finished National Shrine, though in reality, only the lower church had been completed.



**“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 ).

In November of 1956 Mary asked Sister to sketch her image as she had appeared. See the drawing to the left.

On July 1, 1957, Sister Mary Florecita Bidart was granted permission to establish a cloister with a Benedictine Rule within the active group of the Precious Blood Sisters at the Our Lady of Nativity Convent in New Riegel, Ohio. It was a papal enclosure with its own rule and was directly under Rome. The following May Bishop Leibold advised Sister Mildred to enter the cloister. In 1959 the National Shrine was completed and dedicated to the Immaculate Conception as our Patroness. Then, on May 1, 1961, Bishop Leibold, of the Cincinnati diocese, put the imprimatur on Sister's sketch of the medal drawn according to Our Lady's specifications. On May 22, 1962, Bishop George J. Rehring of the Toledo diocese, the diocese of authority over this message, approved distribution of the medals and said the doctrine of the Divine Indwelling of the Most Holy Trinity must be taught if the message is to be understood. On January 25, 1963, Daniel Pilarczyk, S.T.D. of Cincinnati put the Nihil Obstat on the Prayer to the Indwelling Most Holy Trinity; Bishop Leibold granted it the imprimatur. Plaques were made and an image and devotionals were sent to Rome. Later, a stained glass image of Our Lady of America® was placed in a new church in Tennessee. We have been told these actions constitute the first and second stage of official Church approval. While Archbishop Leibold stated his personal approval of the apparition in his letters and aided its promotion, he did not issue a formal letter that constitutes **full** Church approval. Why not? First, he never overstepped proper authority which he always deferred to the Toledo diocese even though he was in Cincinnati, the archdiocese. Secondly, as Father Francis Lammeier, Archbishop Leibold's personal secretary, stated, Archbishop Leibold died before he could do so even if he had wanted to. And thirdly, the messages were incomplete when the archbishop died suddenly on June 1, 1972. Our Lady continued to give Sister Mildred messages concerning needed reforms for the whole Church into the 1980's. Therefore, it was impossible for Archbishop Paul F. Leibold to grant **full canonical approval** to this apparition while Our Lady continued to give us her messages.

It is highly unusual to have a cloister exist within an active religious order; hence, it is no surprise that with time conflict arose between the differing rules of life of the two groups. The cloistered group was advised to separate from the active order and informed their superiors of their desire in December of 1977. When the conflicts worsened, on February 9, 1978, the seven contemplative sisters sent Pope Paul VI a new Rule of Life and a request for exclaustation from the active order, while retaining their vows. Exclaustation is a canonical procedure wherein those exclaustated lose active participation in the order but must be cared for by the order until the exclaustated group is reorganized. Frustrated with the suffering and Rome's delay in approving the new Rule, four sisters left the cloistered group.

The greatest hardship occurred on April 3, 1979 when the foundress, Sister Florecita, died of a massive heart attack, leaving Sister Mildred and Sister Joseph Therese to carry on alone. On December 31, 1979, the Precious Blood order sold the Our Lady of Nativity Convent that had housed the cloister and refused the sisters any further exclaustation benefit, thus leaving them homeless. The order also took from them the printing press that had been their livelihood, as well as a piece of property a priest had given the cloister for a future convent. Abandoned by those they had served for so many years, a relative of Archbishop Leibold provided them with a home. When another bishop who had promised to

take them in failed to do so, the two remaining sisters fell into Rome's bureaucratic cracks and were ignored, as was the message and mandate from heaven so urgent for the United States of America. The two sisters continued in quiet surrender to the Will of God, living in private vow, waiting for Him to bring **His work** to completion in **His time** for the salvation of souls.

What is so special about these two sisters bound together in this great mission for the Church and the world, and for America, is their utter simplicity, humility and surrender to the Will of God that left them totally dependent upon Him. **Sister Mildred and Sister Joseph Therese**, (who inherited Sister Mildred's copyrights and trademarks on the Diary and devotionals when she died in 2000) **share the same fate**. They are God's little ones so often ignored and oppressed by the powerful of this world but so dearly loved by Him.

**“Beloved daughter, you are not being accepted because you are a small one. But in the end all will come as I desire. Those who oppose you will receive light to understand.”** (Our Lady to Sister Mildred, Diary, Pg. 37, August 14, 1980).

**“My little white dove, how humility and simplicity are despised by the proud of this world. Oh what a loss they suffer. For despising the humble Christ will judge them.”** (Letter of Sister Mildred to Father Leibold regarding Our Lord's words.)

[In a 1954 letter to Father Leibold, Sister relates Christ's words for both of them:] **“I seek always the humble and lowly of heart and since I have found two such, so I have entrusted to them a great mission, but become not vain, for I have chosen him and you only because of your unworthiness and lack of virtue. ... You are poor instruments in My Hands, but through you a Great Work will be accomplished. I am the Great Sculptor of souls. With hammer and chisel I form them that they may glorify My Father by their beauty and perfection. Be pliant in My Hands, oh My two lowly ones, My chosen priest and My little white dove, and then will you be formed into My likeness and through you I will be formed in souls.”**

[In a 1957 letter Sister records Our Lady's words:] **“Fear not, small one, for it is through the most unlikely of instruments that God works His wonders. He chooses where the world would not. He makes that possible which the world deems impossible. ...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.”**

**“I am the Great Sculptor of souls.  
Be pliant in My Hands, oh My lowly ones!”**

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