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**MESSENGER**

April-June 2007

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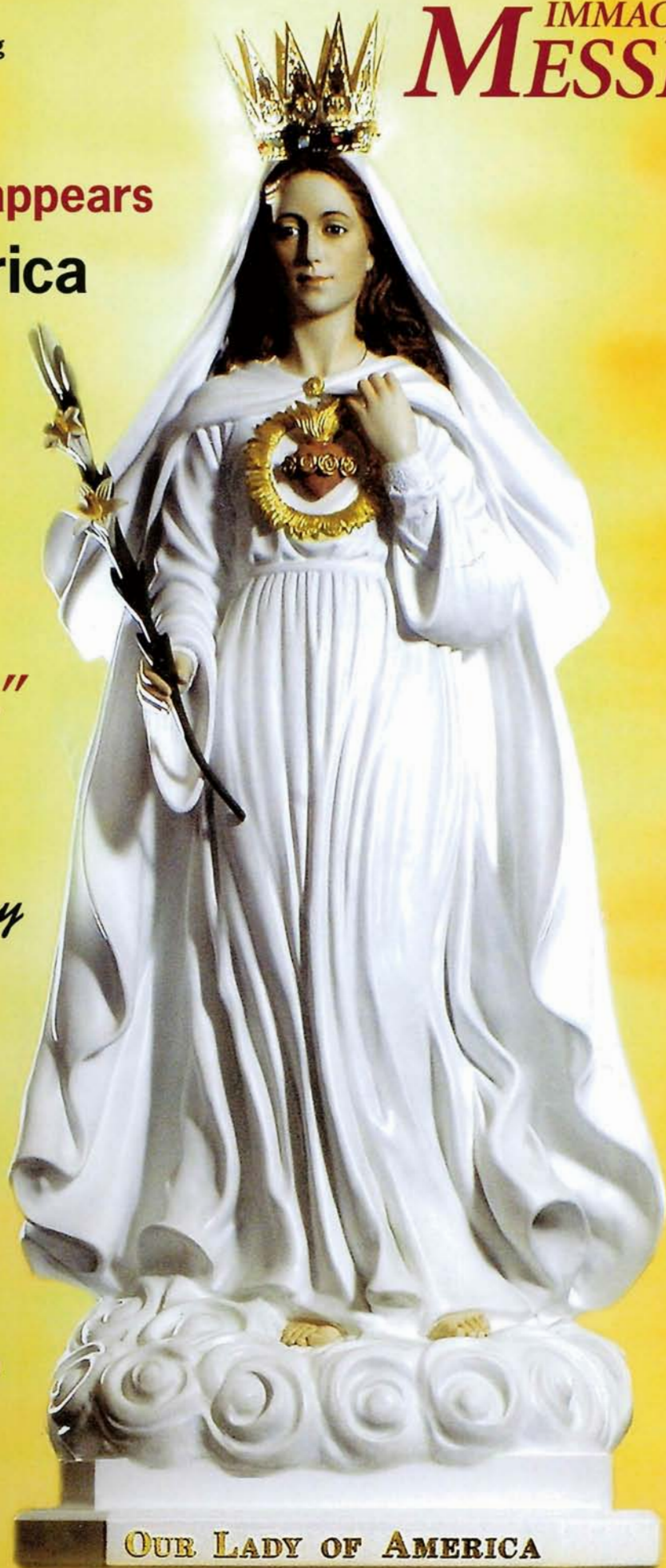
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**OUR LADY OF AMERICA**

# Our Lady of America

## Part 1

### Our Lady appears in America

The Blessed Virgin Mary, identifying herself as “*Our Lady of America*,” began to appear on September 26, 1956, to Sr. Mary Ephrem in the convent of the Precious Blood Sisters at Rome City, Indiana. Her name before entering religious life was Mildred Neuzil. Our Lady said that she had come in response to the United States recognizing her privilege of the Immaculate Conception, especially through the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at Washington, D.C., which was then still under construction.

Our Lady of America came with a message for the United States to focus on the virtue of purity. Our Lady spoke about the recognition of the Most Holy Trinity in the Christian Family. The Holy Family, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, were to be a model of family life.

Monsignor Leibold was spiritual director to Sr. Mary Ephrem for many years until his death in 1972. He became the Archbishop of Cincinnati. He authorized the printing of Our Lady’s messages to Sr. Mary Ephrem.

The Blessed Virgin Mary requested on October 13, 1956, that a statue of “Our Lady of America” be enshrined in the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., as a special place of pilgrimage and a special safeguard for the United States. Our Lady promised miracles greater than those of Lourdes and Fatima if her children heeded her warnings and fulfilled her requests. She indicated that this would be accomplished through her loyal sons, the Bishops of the United States.

In addition to the apparitions of Our Lady to Sr. Mary Ephrem of the Precious Blood Sisters (1933–1979) the revelations included also apparitions of Our Lord and St. Joseph as well as St. Gabriel and St. Michael. Sr. Ephrem later became a Contemplative of the Indwelling Trinity, 1979 —until her death on January 10, 2000.

While Auxiliary Bishop of Cincinnati, Paul F. Leibold formally approved the design for the “Our Lady of America Medal.” He personally paid for striking of the first medals ordered.

“It is the United States that is to lead the world to peace, the peace of Christ, the peace that he brought with him from heaven,” Sr. Mary Ephrem quoted the Virgin as saying. “Dear children, unless the United States accepts and carries out faithfully the mandate given to it by heaven to lead the world to peace, there will come upon it and all nations a great havoc of war and incredible suffering. If, however, the

In 1792 Bishop John Carroll of Baltimore consecrated the new nation to the Immaculate Conception. On May 13, 1846, all bishops unanimously choose the Immaculate Conception as Patroness. Pius IX proclaimed the same in 1847.

United States is faithful to this mandate from heaven and yet fails in the pursuit of peace because the rest of the world will not accept or cooperate, then the United States will not be burdened with the punishment about to fall."

"Weep, then, dear children, weep with your mother over the sins of men," said Mary. "Intercede with me before the throne of mercy, for sin is overwhelming the world and punishment is not far away."

**"It is the darkest hour, but if men will come to me, my Immaculate Heart will make it bright again with the mercy which my Son will rain down through my hands. Help me save those who will not save themselves. Help me bring once again the sunshine of God's peace upon the world."**

"If my desires are not fulfilled much suffering will come to this land. My faithful one, if my warnings are taken seriously and enough of my children strive constantly and faithfully to renew and reform themselves in their inward and outward lives, then there will be no nuclear war. What happens to the world depends upon those who live in it. **There must be much more good than evil prevailing in order to prevent the holocaust that is so near approaching.** Yet I tell you, my daughter, even should such a destruction happen because there were not enough souls who took my warning seriously, there will remain a remnant, untouched by the chaos who, having been faithful in following me and spreading my warnings, will gradually inhabit the earth again with their dedicated and holy lives."

## Reform of personal lives needed

In August 1957 the Blessed Virgin said: "What am I to do, child of my heart, when my children turn from me? The false peace of this world lures them and in the end will destroy them. They think they have done enough in consecrating themselves to my Immaculate Heart. It is not enough. That which I ask for and is most important many have not given me. What I ask, have asked and will continue to ask is reformation of life."

**There must be sanctification from within. I will work my miracles of grace only in those who ask for them and empty their souls of the love and attachment to sin and all that is displeasing to my Son. Souls who cling to sin cannot have their hands free to receive the treasures of grace that I hold out to them."**

The Blessed Virgin Mary promised that her statue as Our Lady of America once placed in the National Shrine of the



**Sr. Mildred Mary Neuzil  
Died January 10, 2000**

Immaculate Conception would be a safeguard for our country, and her picture or statue honored in all homes, a safeguard for the family. She also promised that the medal would be a safeguard against evil for those who wear it with great faith and devotion.

## Messages for the United States for the family

Already in the early 1940's it was made known to Sr. Ephrem that her mission was to converge towards the sanctification of the family. In the year 1954 **Our Lord** enlightened her more on how this was to be accomplished. There was a call for the spiritual renewal of souls.

In another article of this issue some of the messages of our Lady will be quoted. But there were also messages from Our Lord himself to Sr. Ephrem which we quote below and which harmonized with those of our Blessed Mother.

May 22, 1954:

*"...If the world is dying, it is because it will not let me give it life."*

"I am the resurrection and the life, and unless souls seek their life in me, they will find only death and destruction."

"They fear man-made destroyers of life, yet destruction is in themselves. Man destroys himself through the evil that is in himself."

"Implements of war kill only that which is without. Man kills that within himself which none but he can kill."

"God is light, man is darkness, and unless he come into the light, he will be forever darkness."

"The Voice of my Heart is the Voice of Mercy. If man will not listen, there is no more I can do, for he ties my hands."

## Our Lord asks for faith

**Our Lord continued these thoughts at other times. On May 29, 1954, he said: "Do you know what I find most lacking in the world today? It is FAITH. There are so few souls that believe in me and my love. They profess their belief and their love, but they do not live this belief. Their hearts are cold, for without faith there can be no love. Pray and sacrifice yourself, my child, that faith may once again find entrance into the hearts of men."**

Sr. Ephrem already knew for years that her mission, as in the Fatima message, was to converge on the sanctification of the family when she heard these words from Our Lord, July 11, 1954:

*"... I am not loved in the homes of men. And because I am not loved, the Divine Trinity refuses to dwell therein. Children are not taught to love me, because those who have charge over them have no time or patience to do so."*

*"...If the world is dying, it is because it will not let me give it life."*

My Heart grieves over my children in the world. Their hearts are being drawn farther and farther away from me. They will not even listen to my Mother, because they have never been taught to listen.

“My Father is angry. If my children will not listen to my Heart, which is a Voice of mercy and instruction, punishment will come swiftly and none shall be able to stay it. **The pleadings of my Heart have held back the divine justice about to descend on an ungrateful and sinful generation. Woe to parents who teach their children how to gain materially in this world and neglect to prepare them for the next! Woe to children who disobey and show disrespect towards their parents! ‘Honor thy father and thy mother.’ On this shall they be judged most severely.**”

July 12-14, 1954, Jesus spoke as follows on the family:

**“Blessed are the homes where I am loved, for there the Holy Trinity dwells. Blessed are the parents and children who have made a home for God in their hearts.** Little secretary of my Heart, write these instructions for the sanctification of my people. My Father’s house is a house of prayer, and you have made it a den of thieves.”

Obviously Jesus was calling for the home to be a miniature Mystical Body, or domestic church, for Jesus continued:

“...Every home and every soul is my Father’s house, for he made them and they are his. But many of them are no longer sanctified by his presence. Thieves have entered in and stolen from him his temples of prayer. It is you, my children, who have let them in. If you, my children, will cleanse your temples, my Father will return and we will come and make our abode with you. Return, my people, for my Heart hungers and thirsts for your love. If you will not return, the just anger of my Father will descend upon you. What would you [have]—my love or my Father’s anger? 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.”

Like Fatima which began with apparitions of an Angel, in the fall of 1954 Sr. Ephrem experienced the apparition of St. Michael, who said “I am the Angel of Peace.” He asked her if she would accept the cross. She agreed.

On November 8, 1954, shortly after the visit of the Angel of Peace, Our Lady spoke these words: “It the wish of my Son that fathers and mothers strive to imitate me and my chaste spouse in our holy life at Nazareth. We practiced the simple virtues of family life, Jesus our Son being the center of all our love and activity. The Holy Trinity dwelt with us in a manner far surpassing anything that can ever be imagined. For ours was the earthly paradise where once again God walked among men. As in our little home no sin was to be found, so it is the wish of the Heart of my Son and my Immaculate Heart that sin should, as far as possible, be unheard of in the homes of our children.

“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.”

“I need your help to bring peace into the world. Do not disappoint me.”

The message also agrees with that of Our Lady of Soufanieh (Damascus) which tells us that with many families, (millions of them), living the true Christian virtues of authentic Christian family life there will be peace, unity, happiness. [See book, *Light from the East—Miracles of Our Lady of Soufanieh*]

At Fatima, October 13, 1917, during the miracle of the sun, the entire Holy Family appeared. St. Joseph and the Child Jesus were blessing the world. This has been interpreted by the Bishop of Fatima as a call for the sanctification of family life.

On November 20, 1955, Sr. Ephrem experienced an apparition of the Angel Gabriel who said: “I have come to tell you that our Lord is pleased with your effort to do good. He asks that you go to his Mother and learn great purity of heart.”

### ✦ SUMMARY TIMELINE OF EVENTS ✦

- Sr. Mary Ephrem (Mildred Neuzil) was the first born child, in Brooklyn, New York of Austrian Parents: John and Anna Neuzil.
- 1929** Entered active order of Precious Blood at age 13
  - 1933** Professed as a religious; domestic work and kindergarten teacher.
  - 1938** Mystical experiences begins; she thinks them to be common to all religious.
  - 1940's** Sister knew her mission was to pray for the sanctification of the family.
  - 1954-59** Sister is commanded to propagate a specific program of special devotion to Mary under the title “Our Lady of America” who “promises greater miracles than Lourdes or Fatima. ... (But, they will be miracles of the soul, for personal sanctification). Purity of the heart, the youth as leaders of a great spiritual renewal, the placement of the statue of Our Lady of America in the National Shrine, St. Joseph asks for First Wednesday Reparation, and promotion of the study of the “Divine Indwelling of the Most Holy Trinity.”
  - 1963** Mystical experiences are preserved in Sr. Mary Ephrem’s writings/letters and the booklet is produced, “Our Lady of America.”
  - 1972** Archbishop Paul F. Leibold dies after serving as Sister’s spiritual director since 1940.
  - 2000** Sister Mary Ephrem (Mildred Neuzil) dies January 10.



# Our Lady of America

## Part 2

### Our Lady calls for appreciating the gift of Grace

Our Blessed Mother made her first appearance to Sr. Ephrem on September 25, 1956, eve of the feast of the North American Martyrs. She first came as Our Lady of Lourdes and said:

"I am pleased, my child, with the love and honor my children in America give to me, especially through my glorious and unique privilege of the Immaculate Conception. I promise to reward their love by working through the power of my Son's Heart and my Immaculate Heart miracles of grace among them. I do not promise miracles of the body, but of the soul."

Our Lady spoke of her concern for our interior life: "For it is mainly through these miracles of grace that the Holy Trinity is glorified among men and nations. Let America continue and grow in its love for me, and I, in return, in union with the Heart of my Son, promise to work wonders in her. My child, I desire that this be known."

### Description of Our Lady's appearance

On the morning of the Feast of the North American Martyrs, as the Mass had just been concluded and the Sisters' community thanksgiving was almost over, Our Lady appeared to Sr. Ephrem enveloped in a soft glow of light. She wrote:

"What I noticed was the smile on Our Lady's beautiful countenance and the lily she held in her right hand. She wore a white veil reaching almost to the waist and a mantle and robe of pure white with not a single decoration of any kind. An oblong-shaped clasp or brooch held the ends of the mantle together at the top. It was all gold, as was the high and brilliant crown which she wore. Her hair and her eyes seemed of medium brown. Her feet were bare, but these I did not always see, as they were sometimes covered by the moving clouds on which Our Lady stood. She continued to smile. Then I saw her heart appear, encircled with red roses, the symbol of suffering as it was revealed to me, and sending forth flames of fire. With her left hand, Our Lady seemed to be holding up slightly the upper part of her mantle, so that her Immaculate Heart could be seen.



**Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception**

"Then solemnly and distinctly, in calm yet majestic tones, I heard these words: **'I am Our Lady of America. I desire that my children honor me, especially by the purity of their lives.'**

Later that day, during the last half of the Holy Hour between 4:00 and 5:00, the Immaculate Virgin spoke to Sr. Ephrem again:

"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."

Sr. Ephrem wrote: **"Our Lady, moreover, often emphasized her desire that the Shrine in Washington, D.C., be made a place of special pilgrimage. She wishes to be honored there as Our Lady of America, the Immaculate Virgin.**

In October, 1956, St. Joseph spoke as follows:

"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 choirs.

“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 cooperated, *as no other*, in the salvation of the world.”

The deliverance of the soul of St. Joseph from Original Sin before his birth and being confirmed in grace was already a part of the teaching of Saints. St. Alphonsus de Liguori explains it this way:

“To form an idea of the sanctity of St. Joseph, we need only know that he was chosen by God to hold the place of a father over the person of Jesus Christ. St. Paul writes, ‘Who also has made us fit ministers of the new testament’ (2 Cor. 3:6); which, as St. Thomas explains it, means, that ‘when God chooses any one for a particular charge, he gives him the graces which fit him for it. God having, then, chosen St. Joseph to fill the charge of a father over the person of the Incarnate Word, we must certainly believe that he conferred upon him all the gifts of wisdom and sanctity which became such an office. Nor should we doubt that he enriched him with all the graces and privileges granted to other Saints. Gerson and Suarez say, that amongst other privileges he has three, which were special to him. 1. That he was sanctified in his mother’s womb, as Jeremiah and the Baptist; 2. that he was at the same time confirmed in grace; 3. that he was always exempt from the inclinations of concupiscence—a privilege with which St. Joseph, by the merits of his purity, favors his devout clients, delivering them from carnal movements.”

### “This is my shrine” Our Lady said

On October 13, 1956, the Holy Virgin appeared to Sr. Ephrem. Our Lady was very beautiful, and she was again smiling in her heavenly way. She was dressed in the same manner as when first seen by the Sister except that her Immaculate Heart did not appear. Instead of the lily, Mary held with both hands a small replica of the finished Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Our Lady spoke:

**“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.”**



**An earlier version statue of Our Lady of America has been at the shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament, Hanceville, Alabama, the past summer and fall. It was taken in procession at times.**

Thus our Blessed Mother made it very clear to Sr. Ephrem that she was most pleased with the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception which was then being built in Washington, D.C. This National Shrine is dedicated to the honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who, as the Immaculate Conception, was declared patroness of the United States in 1846.

The shrine project was first launched in 1914; the site and foundation stone were blessed in 1920; the crypt, an underground church, was completed in 1926; the main church and superstructure were dedicated November 20, 1959. About 60 chapels and additional interior furnishings have been installed since the dedication. The Byzantine-style mosaic of “Christ in Majesty” dominates the North Apse. In the West Transept is the Last Judgment mosaic, depicting Christ’s glorious second coming. The mosaic in the East Transept portrays the biblical account of the six days of creation.

The Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., is the eighth largest religious building in the world, with normal seating and standing accommodations for 6,000 persons. Eight thousand persons attended one function in 1971. Over a million persons now visit the Shrine each year. It is located adjacent to the Catholic University of America.

### Our Lady asks for statue of her likeness

On November 15, 1956, Our Lady taught Sr. Ephrem the little prayer: “By thy Holy and Immaculate Conception, O Mary, deliver us from evil.”

Then Our Lady asked the Sister to draw a picture of her first appearance. She was also requested to have a statue made according to this likeness and placed, after being solemnly carried in procession, in the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. Mary desired to be honored there in a special way as *Our Lady of America, the Immaculate Virgin*.

From January 1957 to 1958, Our Lady’s warnings were given again and again such as the words spoken in January 1957:

"The hour grows late. My Son's patience will not last forever. Help me hold back his anger, which is about to descend on sinful and ungrateful men. Suffering and anguish, such as never before experienced, is about to overtake mankind. It is the darkest hour. But if men will come to me, my Immaculate Heart will make it bright again with the mercy which my Son will rain down through my hands. Help me save those who will not save themselves. Help me bring once again the sunshine of God's peace upon the world. ... Tell the Bishops of the United States, my loyal sons, of my desires and how I wish them to be carried out. Through him who is head over you, make known the longings of my Immaculate Heart to establish the reign of my Divine Son in the hearts of men and thus save them from the scourge of heaven, both now and hereafter. ...

"Reform of life is what I ask as the sign and proof of my children's love for me. God looks at the heart, and if it resembles the Heart of His Divine Son, it is with the greatest pleasure He regards it."

## Go to the Mother to become like Jesus

"But to make your hearts grow more and more like to the Heart of the Son, you must go to the Mother, whose heart is most like His. From this Pure and Immaculate Heart you will learn all that will make you more pleasing to the Divine Heart of the Son of God. The Holy Trinity looks down with infinite delight upon such souls and makes them Its heaven upon earth. ...

"O my sweet child, when will my desires be realized? My Immaculate Heart desires with great desire to see the kingdom of Jesus my Son established in all hearts. How I have pleaded with my children to open their hearts to him, but most are cold and indifferent. Has ever a mother shown more love and interest in her children's welfare than I have done? O my little one, daughter of my Pure Heart, you must pray with greater fervor and offer yourself with greater love to the Heart of my Son.

"My sweet child, unless my children reform their lives, they will suffer great persecution. If man will not take upon himself the penance necessary to atone for his sins and those of others, God in his justice will have to send upon him the punishment necessary to atone for his transgressions."

The Blessed Mother spoke of the greatness of being in the state of sanctifying grace. She spoke of reformation, renewal of the interior life. She was much concerned about sanctification from within. She was most anxious to impress us with the greatness of the gift of God, namely, the indwelling of the Holy Trinity in the soul which is in the state of sanctifying grace.

**It is the teaching of Sacred Scripture and the Church that the Most Blessed Trinity dwells in the soul which is in grace. By sanctifying grace one participates in the divine nature, shares in the life of God. However, many do not appreciate or realize this great gift.**

On the feast of the Immaculate Heart, [then celebrated] August 22, 1957, Our Lady said: "My Heart, my Immaculate Heart, is the channel through which the graces of the Sacred Heart are given to me. Time passes and with it wasted graces and constant refusals on the part of man to co-operate with me in the accomplishment of the Divine Will for his own sanctification and salvation.

"Behold, my small one, so tenderly loved by your Mother, behold then my Heart pierced by a cruel sword! Oh, what grief my children have caused me! ..."

## Mary speaks to priests

"My dear daughter, sweet child, write my words carefully, because they are of the utmost importance. **I address them to my beloved sons, the priests, dedicated to the most intense and extraordinary imitation of my Son in the perfect carrying on of His Eternal Priesthood:**

"Beloved sons, so cherished and greatly blessed among the sons of men, be careful to uphold the sanctity and dignity of your calling. Let the faithful see in you the favored and especially loved imitators of the Son of God. Be modest in your dress and speech as becomes those of so exalted a vocation. The apparel and manners of a man of the world is not for you, who, though living in the world, must not take on its ways.

"It is through you that the grace of the Sacraments is given to souls. Strive then to make yourselves more worthy receptacles to receive these graces and transmit them in turn to the souls under your care.

"Dear sons, I ask you to practice self-denial and penance in a special manner, because it is you who must lead my children in the way of peace. Yet this peace will come only by way of the sword, the flaming sword of love. If, therefore, you love my Son and wish to honor me, heed my admonition and be the first to give the example of a life of penance and self-denial. Thus, by sanctification from within you, you will become a bright and burning light to the faithful, who look to you for help and guidance."

Priests should teach about the divine indwelling of the Most Blessed Trinity and its relationship to the Holy Eucharist. All Catholics need to realize by being instructed in the fullness of true faith that they come into a special union with the entire Blessed Trinity each time they receive Holy Communion in the state of grace.

Jesus complained to St. Faustina, Diary (#1385) that many receive him and treat him as a dead object. "When I come to a human heart in Holy Communion, my hands are full of all kinds of graces which I want to give to the soul, but souls do not even pay attention to me. They leave me to myself and busy themselves with other things. ... They treat me as a dead object."

Evident in the message of Jesus and Our Lady of America is for priests to teach and all Catholics to realize that the Holy

Eucharist is *alive*. We receive the same Jesus Christ *alive* who is reigning gloriously in heaven.

“Under the consecrated species of bread and wine, Christ himself, *living and glorious*, is present in a true, real, and substantial manner” (Catechism of the Catholic Church).

“I am the *living bread*. ... Whoever eats this bread will *live* forever. ... Just as the *living* Father sent me and I have *life* because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have *life* because of me” (Jn 6:51, 57).

Jesus in the Holy Eucharist does not exist alone but as the Son of God in the eternal unity with His Father and the Holy Spirit. He is present the same manner as he is present in heaven. The Council of Trent teaches that the Eucharist contains “the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ.” His sacred body is there, his precious blood is there, his immortal soul is there,

his divine Person. All are present there in every particle of the consecrated host. Since the Person of God the Son united to his human nature is there the entire Blessed Trinity is there. Note the deep meaning of the Council in teaching “*together with the soul and divinity.*”

“The Trinity is One. We do not confess three Gods, but one God in Three Persons, the consubstantial Trinity.’ The divine persons do not share one divinity among themselves but each of them is God whole and entire” (CCC 253).

Where the Father and the Son are present, the Holy Spirit is also there. We receive

the same Son incarnate—just as he is now gloriously present in heaven. Thus, the Blessed Trinity dwells in the heart and soul of each person receiving Holy Communion.

When we receive Jesus Christ sacramentally, whether under the species of bread or wine or both, God the Father and God the Holy Spirit become present with the Son Incarnate, in a true, complete, and substantial way. The sacramental presence of the Body, Blood and Soul of Jesus remain in us as long as the species remain undigested; that can vary from 15 minutes to half an hour, depending on one’s metabolism. The indwelling of the Most Blessed Trinity remains in the soul so long as one is in the state of sanctifying grace. The message of Our Lady of America repeatedly ask us to become

aware with love and devotion of the divine indwelling of the Most Blessed Trinity in the soul which is in grace.

Many of the saints experienced this indwelling of the Holy Trinity for which Our Lady of America was asking that all become conscious. St. Faustina wrote of it this way:

“Once after Holy Communion, I heard these words: ‘You are our dwelling place.’ At that moment I felt in my soul the presence of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (Diary, #451). During Eucharistic Adoration: “I knew more distinctly than ever before the Three Divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. My soul is in communion with these Three. ... Whoever is united to One of the Three Persons is thereby united to the whole Blessed Trinity, for this Oneness is indivisible” (Diary, # 472).

## Mary asks for the Rosary

On the evening of the feast of the Most Holy Rosary, October 7, 1957, Our Lady appeared with a blue rosary of a glass-like quality hanging from her right hand. She spoke:

“My child, there will be peace, as has been promised, but not until my children are purified and cleansed from defilement, and clothed thus with the white garment of grace, are made ready to receive this peace, so long promised and so long held back because of the sins of men.

“My dear children, either you will do as I desire and reform your lives, or God himself will need to cleanse you in the fires of untold punishment. You must be prepared to receive his great gift of peace. If you will not prepare yourselves, God will himself be forced to do so in his justice and mercy.

“Making the Rosary a family prayer is very pleasing to me. I ask that all families strive to do so. But be careful to say it with great devotion, meditating on each mystery and striving to imitate in our daily lives the virtues depicted therein. Live the mysteries of the Rosary as I lived them, and it will become a chain binding you to me forever. They who are found in the circle of my Rosary will never be lost. I myself will lead them at death to the throne of my Son, to be eternally united to him.”



Sanctification of the family is a focus of the messages. Thus St. Joseph has a major role.

New Book

## A PRIEST IS A PRIEST FOREVER

This autobiography, which our editor was asked to write by priests, religious and laity, will be heart-warming, spiritual reading for all.

**Read it yourself. Give to others as a gift.**

See page 2 for more information.



## St. Joseph speaks of fatherhood

The greatness and sanctity of St. Joseph is manifested in messages of Our Lady of America. His power of intercession for us is next to that of Mary. All should ask whether they have given proper honor to St. Joseph since the Son of God chose to honor him with the title "Father." He is the virginal father of Jesus Christ.

Mary, while on earth, spoke of him this way. "Your father and I have sought you sorrowing" (Luke 2:33). St. Basil asked: "What angel or saint ever merited to be called the father of the Son of God? Joseph alone was thus called." St. Alphonsus de Liguori said: "Hence we can well apply to St. Joseph the words of St. Paul, "being made so much better than the angels, as he has inherited a more excellent name than they" (Heb. 1:4).

# Our Lady of America

## Part 3

Joseph was head of the Holy family and in that Holy House the Son of God obeyed. "He was subject to them." (Luke 2: 51). This manifests the humility of Jesus Christ but it also shows the greatness of the dignity of St. Joseph. St. Bernard said that St. Joseph was made a "cooperator in the work of redemption."

St. Alphonsus wrote: "If the two disciples going to Emmaus were inflamed with Divine love by the few moments which they spent in company with our Savior, and by his words; so much so, that they said, 'Was not our heart burning within us while he spoke in the way?' — what flames of holy love must we not suppose to have been enkindled in the heart of St. Joseph,



St. Joseph, head of the Holy Family, holds Child Jesus. Both are holding lilies, symbol of purity.

who for 30 years conversed with Jesus Christ, and listened to his words of eternal life, who observed the perfect example which he [Jesus] gave of humility and patience, and saw the promptitude with which he obeyed and helped him in his labors, and in all that was needed for the household!"

On March 11, 1958, Sr. Ephrem was told by our Lady: "St. Joseph will come on the eve of his Feast. Prepare yourself well. There will be a special message. My holy spouse has an important part to play in bringing peace to the world."

### Important message from St. Joseph

When St. Joseph came on the eve of his Feast he spoke these words:

"Kneel down, my daughter, for what you will hear and what you will write will bring countless souls to a new way of life.

"Through you, small one, the Trinity desires to make known to souls Its desire to be adored, honored, and loved within the kingdom, the interior kingdom of their hearts.

"I bring to souls the purity of my life and the obedience that crowned it.

**"All fatherhood is blessed in me whom the Eternal Father chose as his representative on earth, the Virgin-Father of his own divine Son. Through me the heavenly Father has blessed all fatherhood, and through me he continues and will continue to so until the end of time.**

**"My spiritual fatherhood extends to all God's children, and together with my Virgin Spouse I watch over them with great love and solicitude.**

**"Fathers must come to me, to learn obedience to authority; to the Church always, as the mouthpiece of God, to the laws of the country in which they live, insofar as these do not go against God and their neighbor.**

"Mine was perfect obedience to the Divine Will, as it was shown and made known to me by the Jewish law and religion. To be careless in this is most displeasing to God and will be severely punished in the next world.

"Let fathers also imitate my great purity of life and the deep respect I held for my Immaculate Spouse. Let them be an example to their children and fellowmen, never willfully doing anything that would cause scandal among God's people.

**"Fatherhood is from God, and it must take once again its rightful place among men."**

St. Joseph stopped speaking for a time and Sr. Ephrem saw his most pure heart. She said it seemed to be lying on a cross which was of brown color. It appeared that at the top of the heart, in the midst of the flames pouring out, was a pure white lily. "Behold this pure heart so pleasing to him who made it. The cross upon which my heart rests is the cross of the passion, which was ever present before me, causing me intense suffering. I desire souls to come to my heart that they may learn true union with the Divine Will."

St. Joseph then promised to come the next day, March 19, 1958, in the evening. He appeared speaking the following words:

"My child, I desire a day to be set aside to honor my fatherhood. The privilege of being chosen by God to be the Virgin-Father of His Son was mine alone, and no honor, excluding that bestowed upon my Holy Spouse, was ever, or will ever, be as sublime or as high as this.

**"The Holy Trinity desires thus to honor me that in my unique fatherhood all fatherhood might be blessed.**

"Dear child, I was king in the little home of Nazareth, for I sheltered within it the Prince of Peace and the Queen of Heaven. To me they looked for protection and sustenance, and I did not fail them. I received from them the deepest love and reverence, for in me they saw him whose place I took over them [God the Father].

**"So the head of the family must be loved, obeyed, and respected, and in return be a true father and protector to those under his care. In honoring in a special way my fatherhood, you also honor Jesus and Mary. The Divine Trinity has placed into our keeping the peace of the world.**

"The imitation of the Holy Family, my child, of the virtues we practiced in our little home at Nazareth is the way for all souls to that peace which comes from God alone and which none other can give."

It was then that St. Joseph suddenly stopped speaking and a stupendous vision of St. Joseph glorified was shown. Sr. Ephrem described the glorious St. Joseph as follows:

### St. Joseph seen in glorified state

"He seemed suspended, as it were, a short distance above what had the appearance of a large globe with clouds moving about" raised, the eyes gazing upward as if in ecstasy. The hands were in a position similar to that of the priest during the celebration of Holy Mass, only they extended upward somewhat more. The color of his hair, as also of his rather small and slightly forked beard, seemed a very dark brown. His eyes resembled in color the hair and beard, He was clothed in a white

robe that reached to his ankles. Over this he wore a sort of cloak which did not come together at the throat, but covering the shoulders and draped gracefully over each arm, reached to the hem of the robe. The cloak at times had, or seemed to have, the appearance of a brown, sometimes a purple, hue, or perhaps a slight blending of the two. The belt about his waist was of a gold color, as were his sandals.

"His appearance, though quite youthful, gave at the same time the impression of rare maturity combined with great strength. He seemed a bit taller than medium height. The lines of his face appeared strong and purposeful, softened somewhat by a gentle serenity. I also saw his most pure heart at this time. Moreover, I saw the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove hovering above his head.

"Standing sideways, facing each other, were two angels, one on the right, the other on the left. Each carried what appeared to be a small pillow in a satin covering, the pillow on the right bearing a gold crown, the one on the left, a gold scepter. The angels were all white, even their faces and hair. It was a beautiful whiteness that reminded me of the stainlessness of heaven.

"Then I heard these words: 'Thus should he be honored whom the King desires to honor.'"



The messages emphasize the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity in the soul and in the Eucharist.

## The Great Promise of St. Joseph

On March 30, 1958, St. Joseph appeared saying:

**"I am the protector of the Church and the home, as I was the protector of Christ and His Mother while I lived upon earth. Jesus and Mary desire that my pure heart, so long hidden and unknown, be now honored in a special way. Let my children honor my most pure heart in a special manner on the First Wednesday of the month by reciting the *Joyful Mysteries* of the Rosary in memory of my life with Jesus and Mary and the love I bore them, the sorrow I suffered with them. Let them receive Holy Communion in union with the love with which I received the Savior for the first time and each time I held him in my arms.**

**"Those who honor me in this way will be consoled by my presence at their death, and I myself will conduct them safely into the presence of Jesus and Mary.**

"I will come again, little child of my most pure heart. Until then, continue in patience and humility, which is so pleasing to God."

St. Joseph kept his promise and came again with Jesus and Mary on March 30. Jesus had the appearance of a boy about 15 or 16 years of age. Jesus spoke first. It was about the sanctification of the family and other matters. Our Lady and St. Joseph also spoke on the sanctification of the family and also about the Divine Indwelling.

The Holy Family wants all of us, and in a special way the members of a family, to be aware that the entire Blessed Trinity lives in every soul which is in the state of grace. St. Paul in Sacred Scripture wrote of this: "Know you not that you are the temples of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you" (1 Cor. 3:16). Also, "You are the temple of the living God" (1 Cor. 6:16). Jesus Christ declares: "If any one loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him; we will come to him and make our dwelling place with him" (John 14: 23).

The Church has granted indulgences to prayers offered to the divine indwelling: "O most Holy Trinity, who are dwelling by thy grace within my soul, I adore you."—"O most Holy Trinity, who are dwelling by thy grace within my soul, sanctify me more and more."—"O most Holy Trinity, who are dwelling by thy grace within my soul, make me love you more and more."

## Effect of the Blessed Trinity in the soul

The effect of the divine indwelling is sanctifying grace, which is the created result of the uncreated grace of God's presence in the soul. It gives the soul a sharing in the very life of God, a share in the divine nature. Its effect on the person is an experience that spiritual writers compare to a foretaste of the beatific vision with the mind able to understand something of the mystery of God and the will is enamored of God's goodness beyond anything possible by the light of

reason or the natural affective powers of humans. The Carmelite nun, Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity, whose major focus of spirituality was great devotion to the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity in her soul, wrote: "I have found my heaven upon earth, for heaven is where God is and God is in my soul."

In the messages of Our Lady of America it was obviously foreseen by heaven the desanctification of the family that was coming upon the country and the disregard for the role of the father as head of the family. Thus the greatness of grace in the soul and the model of St. Joseph are emphasized in the messages.

Except for a few occasions, as when she showed herself as Our Lady of the Divine Indwelling, Our Lady always came to Sr. Ephrem in the manner in which she appeared as Our Lady of America.

The Holy Family in heaven is concerned that families upon earth be holy, live in the state of sanctifying grace and treasure the indwelling of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in their souls. The indwelling of the Blessed Trinity is known as "uncreated" grace which brings with it "created" sanctifying grace which gives a sharing in the life of God and a participation in the divine nature. We do not grow in "uncreated" grace for the infinite Father, Son and Holy Spirit dwell within us and what is infinite cannot be increased. "Created" grace or sharing in the life of God varies in intensity according to the dispositions of each soul. We should be growing each day in sanctifying grace by everything we do for love of God. We grow in such grace especially through participation in the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacraments. The great aid to growth in grace is the Holy Eucharist which is Jesus Christ Himself. Thus the messages of Our Lady of America, while converging towards the sanctification of the family, emphasize the importance of the Sacraments for holiness. Husbands and wives grow in grace by doing and living the duties of their state in life.

On February 23, 1959, Our Lady came to Sr. Ephrem and admonished her to work on the "message" as soon as possible so that it might be placed in the hands of the bishops who would be responsible for its fulfillment.

As indicated in the editorial of this issue, the request of Our Lady of America through Sr. Ephrem received renewed interest and emphasis when the statue, the same which graces the cover of this issue, was displayed and blessed at the United States Bishops Conference last November.

The statue was displayed for the Bishops following the request of Archbishop Burke, working through Msgr. James Maroney, Executive Director of the USCCB Secretariat for the Liturgy.

Let us hope and pray that this will open doors for the statue to finally be placed in the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, our National Shrine to our Blessed Mother in Washington, D.C.

