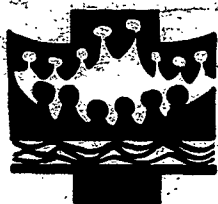


Insights In Liturgy

By Thomas Driscoll



Neumann: Mirror Of Christ

John Nepomucene Neumann, the fourth bishop of Philadelphia (1852-1860), of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, was a man of great piety, solid virtue, learned, devoted and experienced in pastoral work. He offers a superb model of Christian life.

teaching orders, including the Holy Cross Sisters and Brothers, and the Christian Brothers to the diocese. For the religious education of the faithful, in addition to numerous unsigned newspaper and magazine articles, he published the Kleiner Katechismus and Katholischer Katechismus.

Second, Neumann was devoted to the life of prayer. He was the first ordinary to introduce the Devotion of the Forty Hours on a diocesan scale. To many, the introduction of this practice seemed premature. Neumann issued a pamphlet containing the history, rubrics and prayers in English and Latin. First celebrated at St. Philip Neri, the faithful enthusiastically attended the exercises and zealously made visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Encouraged by this, and stimulated by the Roman indulgence of 1855, other churches entered the devotion. Neumann also promoted a novena before Dec. 8 to encourage piety.

Third, John Neumann was concerned about the needs of his people and his ability to lead. After issuing a pastoral to the faithful on May 1, 1855, he attended the Eighth Provincial Council of Baltimore, where he showed that the increasing number of Catholics required the division of his diocese. Neumann proposed new dioceses at Pottsville and Wilmington. He was convinced that more could be done in Philadelphia by one whose natural gifts enabled him to arouse the faithful and officiate to their satisfaction on great occasions. In a letter to his predecessor, Archbishop Kenrick (Nov. 19, 1856), he seemed almost certain of his transfer. Pius IX did not divide the diocese but appointed James Wood to be coadjutor. At a successive clergy meeting in 1857, Neumann made a remarkable and humble move. He shared his authority with Bishop Wood. Neumann devoted himself to an increase in the interior spirit of the institutions. Much of the external work, including the completion of the cathedral, parish visitation and diocesan financial affairs, were delegated to Wood. This was a most progressive and innovative step for the 1850s.

Given his milieu, Neumann showed a creative approach to ministry in education, prayer and practical administration which can be a model for all of us.

"Father, you called blessed John Neumann to labor for the gospel among his people of the new world.

"His ministry strengthened many others in the Christian faith:

"Through his prayers may faith grow strong in this land."

— Opening Prayer, Jan. 5, Sacramentary.

John Neumann: Redemptorist

This year the Redemptorists celebrate the 250th anniversary of their founding. Yesterday, Jan. 5, was the feast of the congregation's most widely known saint in this area, Bishop John Neumann. The following appreciation of him was written by Father Patrick Magnier, CSSR, stationed at Our Lady of Victory Church.

Not to be confused with the renowned English convert and cardinal, John Henry Newman, John Nepomucene Neumann was born in Bohemia (part of present-day Czechoslovakia) of a staunch Catholic family.

The two men had much in common — not least, strong, vibrant faith that neither man could keep to himself. They both exerted every effort to spread it with missionary zeal. The former

strove mightily with pen and pulpit to reclaim for his native land its ancient title of Mary's Dowry. The latter followed fellow exiles across the Atlantic to the New World to help them preserve their richest treasure and inheritance — the age old Catholic Faith.

Completing with distinction his studies at the University of Prague, the young Bohemian's future held bright prospects in the Austrian empire for one of his intellect. He chose, however, to devote his life and talents to a higher king and a nobler cause. Once his mind was made up to be a priest he wasted no time. He decided to finish his studies in America, and within one month of his arrival was accepted by the New York archdiocese, and was ordained in June of 1836.

After six years in the ministry, the better to give himself more completely to God and to souls, he joined the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. He had many links with the Flower City. It was in Rochester that he became acquainted with the Redemptorists who were then ministering to German immigrants in upstate New York. He received part of his novitiate training here and was the first Redemptorist novice to be professed in this country, in January 1852.

After ten years as a loyal son of St. Alphonsus, he was appointed by Pope Pius IX the fourth Bishop of Philadelphia. The date coincided with his birthday, March 28, 1852, at the age of 41.

His two great passions were the Eucharist and the Blessed Mother — hallmarks of orthodoxy. During the Holy Year 1975, Pope Paul VI asked the question: "Is there any justification for the idea of a weak Christianity without firm convictions, agnostic, fickle, opportunistic, cowardly — motivated by fear of what people will say?"

The century before, John Neumann gave a resounding answer to that challenge by word and example — by a life dedicated to evangelization, uncompromisingly preached and practiced — truly a man and model for all seasons to rescue an American Church threatened on all sides today by timidity, division and open dissent.

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THANKS TO St. Jude, Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal and Blessed Lord for favor received. R.F.S.

THANKS TO the Holy Family, St. Jude and Blessed Catherine Tekowitza for many favors received.

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New Post

Olga DeSemler, a counselor with Catholic Family Center, has recently been assigned to the Monroe County Department of Social Services to help plan and deliver appropriate child welfare services for Hispanic children. The position was filled by special agreement with the CFC.

Nursing Degree Program

Area registered nurses will have an opportunity to obtain information concerning the completion of a bachelor's degree in nursing at an open meeting, 7-8:30 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 12, in Kearney Hall, room 301, St. John Fisher College.

Faculty members will describe the features of the program which is designed for nurses who are graduates of associate degree or diploma programs in nursing. Refreshments will follow a question and answer period. For further information call Mrs. Lillian Nail, director of the program, 586-8421.

FOCUS ON EUCHARIST

The next devotions for Focus on the Eucharist will begin at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 7, at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, 630 Brooks Ave. Father Paul Wohlrab will celebrate a Mass following recitation of evening prayer and the rosary. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is part of the rites.

A HANDFUL OF CASH IS BETTER THAN A GARAGE-FUL OF STUFF. An illustration of a man in a suit pushing a shopping cart overflowing with various household items like a television, a refrigerator, a washing machine, and a vacuum cleaner. The man is looking back at the camera with a weary expression.