

true Servant



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St. John Neumann as a Redemptorist

While serving at the National Shrine of St. John Neumann day in and day out, the Redemptorists can easily take for granted that it was a very natural step for Neumann to enter the Redemptorists on January 16, 1842. But his biographers tell us that he had considered joining the Redemptorists for a number of years before making the decision final.

Dating from some health difficulties in 1840, Father John Neumann began to correspond with Fr. Prost, a Redemptorist, regarding different pastoral questions and situations. Neumann's nephew, John Berger, C.S.S.R., writes the following: "it was not until the close of 1840 that he (Neumann) felt drawn to the religious life."

In his journal, Neumann himself writes: "for four years, I strove earnestly to animate my people to fervor, similar to that which I remarked in St. Joseph's Parish, Rochester, but I did not succeed. This, added to a natural, or rather a supernatural longing to live in some society of priests, so as not to be left to myself in the midst of a thousand and one dangers incidental to the world, inspired me with the thought of entering the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorists). On that same day, nay at that same hour, September 4, 1840, I applied to the Superior, Rev. Father Prost, for admission."

Neumann continues: "On the 16th of the same month, I received permission to enter, with directions to repair to Pittsburgh. Immediately on receipt of this letter, I notified Right Rev. Bishop Hughes, of the New York diocese, of my intention. Reluctantly, and only after long deliberation and

repeated refusals, did the Bishop grant me my discharge."

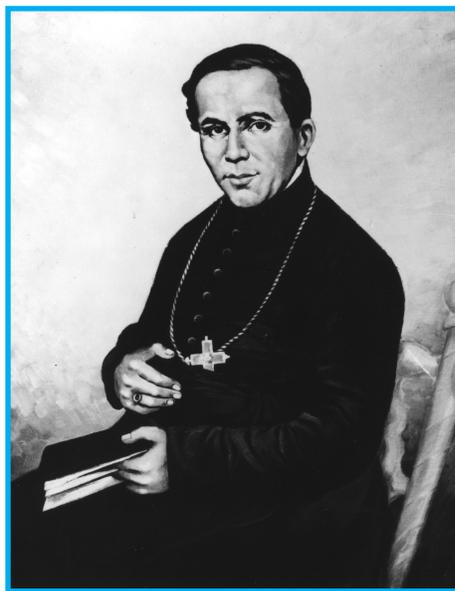
The Redemptorists first came to America in June of 1832. Finally, seven years later after wandering the countryside without gaining their first permanent residence, they founded their first permanent U.S. residence at St. Philomena's Church in Pittsburgh.

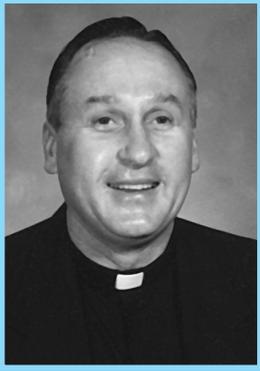
There were a number of occasions during this time when Neumann was alone working in the surrounding area and he of course expected to be working alongside other Redemptorists most of the time. Fr. Prost was now Superior at St. Philomena's and regretted Neumann's doing so much of his apostolic work alone; but under the difficult circumstances, it was something he could not remedy.

In May of 1841, Fr. John Neumann was ordered to report to St. John's in Baltimore. In Baltimore for just three days, he was informed that he was to go to New York. Two weeks after that, he was ordered to go to Rochester and continue his novitiate there. After a little more than two months, the Redemptorist novice-priest had

to go to Buffalo, near the site of his first ministry as a diocesan priest. Circumstances continued to get worse, and our saint was sent to Norwalk, Ohio. Neumann began to think whether his change from place to place in the Redemptorists was a sign that he was not wanted in the Redemptorists.

Fr. Prost paternally wrote to Fr. John Neumann virtually apologizing for the Redemptorists' sending of Neumann to many assignments in a short period of time. Neumann wondered whether he was taking the right step in entering the Redemptorist Order, which did not seem to be on a firm footing in its still





Dear Friends of St. John Neumann,

As May is the month of Mary, I would like to write a few words

about Mary and St. John Neumann.

St. John Neumann had a deep devotion to Mary. He was a true disciple of St. Alphonsus, the Founder of the Redemptorists, who wrote the wonderful devotional book "The Glories of Mary", and who also had a great love of Mary.

Neumann's biographer, Joseph Berger, C.S.S.R., writes the following: "In October 1854, Bishop Neumann received from the Holy Father, Pope Pius IX, a formal invitation to the Eternal City to be present at the solemn promulgation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God. A devoted client of the Queen of Heaven, the triumph of his Lady was happiness to him, and to be able to join the Head of the Church, in celebrating her glorious prerogative was a favor not to be discarded." Upon hearing that his son would be present in Rome for the promulgation, Neumann's father wrote to him: "But why must the Bishops be summoned from America to Rome to tell us that the Blessed Virgin was conceived

without sin? Have we not always believed that?"

Neumann's presence in Rome for the occasion meant a great deal to him. To a priest in Bohemia, he wrote: "To describe the solemnity of the 8th instant would be greatly beyond my power, even had I time to do so. You may see from the programme enclosed the ceremonies of that glorious occasion. I thank God that, to the multiplied graces already bestowed upon me, He has added this of having been present in Rome on that day."

St. John Neumann did not only have a special devotion to Mary, but also followed her example, as well as all great Saints do, by living a life of poverty and simplicity.

Mary stands out in the Gospels as the woman of faith and trust in God: "I am the handmaid of the Lord. Do with me as you wish." That certainly was the way that St. John Neumann lived his life. He lived as a Redemptorist, priest, and Bishop with faith and complete trust in God in everything he did.

Mary stands out in the Gospels as the servant of the Lord, calling herself servant and handmaid of the Lord. I think of St. John Neumann building 80 churches and 40 Catholic Schools in eight years. He was a man totally dedicated in being a servant

of God and of God's people, especially the immigrant population.

Mary lived "simply" as the Mother of Jesus, wife of Joseph, as a neighbor and daughter of God. One of the reasons some people said that St. John Neumann should not have been Bishop of Philadelphia is that he dressed too poorly as a Bishop, and should have dressed more elegantly. St. John Neumann never forgot his vow of poverty as a Redemptorist, and was too busy thinking of God's people and their needs than to be dressed elegantly. He always lived "simply" before God.

Mary lived to give honor and glory to God and in the joy of the Lord: "My soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior." St. John Neumann built 80 wonderful and magnificent Churches, with the help of the people of God here in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, for the honor and glory of God. With all the sacrifices and hard work he did, he did it with joy in serving the Lord and God's people.

May we all reflect in our lives the holiness and simplicity Mary and St. John Neumann.

*Love and prayers,
Fr. Kevin Moley, C.S.S.R.*

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We Redemptorists Give Praise and Thanks to God For:

**Luyen Dau, C.S.S.R.
Thomas McCluskey, C.S.S.R.
Francis Mulvaney, C.S.S.R.**

*Ordained at the National Shrine
of the Immaculate Conception*

**Saturday, May 10th
and**

Peter Hill, C.S.S.R.

*Ordained on the Island of
Dominica on June 12th*

*Please pray for vocations to the
priesthood and the religious life.*

true Servant

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Very Rev. Patrick Woods, C.S.S.R.
Provincial Superior

Rev. Kevin Moley, C.S.S.R.
Director

Rev. Raymond Collins, C.S.S.R.
Editor

**NATIONAL SHRINE
of ST. JOHN NEUMANN**

**1019 N. Fifth Street • Phila., PA 19123
(215) 627-3080**

**Our Website: www.stjohnneumann.org
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Our Saint and the Healing of Young People



Please write the names of 11 of your most needy parishioners! I thank dear St. John Neumann for the safe delivery of our beautiful "triplet" girls. Their second birthday is coming around soon. We were told a year ago that my daughter had a complication called TTT, 'twin to twin' transfer. She was not going to be able to deliver the babies. In other words, they would die in the womb.

We were given a first class relic of dear St. John Neumann and immediately started a Novena.

Two weeks after the initial diagnosis, the doctors called our daughter from the hospital and said she should go to bed. The TTT had totally disappeared!!! She was in bed for 33 weeks and delivered our dear angels successfully and in good health! The Doctor could not explain the disappearance of the TTT. A miracle? We think so. We are totally grateful to God through the intercession of St. John Neumann and will help your parish in any way we can.

– Peg

If you have any stories or experiences in which you have felt the touch of God through the intercession of St. John Neumann, please let us know. This is a beautiful way of witnessing to your faith.

A young lady came up to me just as the Noon mass was beginning with a Catholic friend of hers. She herself was not Catholic but came to the Shrine a few weeks before. The doctors had diagnosed her with six lymphoma tumors. Two were on her spleen. We prayed with her after Mass and blessed her with the relic of St. John Neumann. A few days ago, she made a return visit to her doctors for some follow-up

on the diagnosis. The doctors could find no sign of the tumors described in the previous tests. Their explanation was that perhaps there were some infections present that caused the problems. Our answer is that perhaps some 'other' Physician had healed her through the intercession of our *Little Bishop*.

– Editor

early days in America!

To summarize this segment of Neumann's spiritual journey with the Redemptorists, he writes in his journal: "You know O Lord and God, that in my way of thinking and in my will, I submit to Your Holy Will unconditionally and will ever persevere in this holy Order if it please You."

Finally, his last six weeks before professing his vows as a Redemptorist were spent in Baltimore in the prayerful atmosphere for which he longed. On January 16, 1842, our saint became Fr. John Neumann, C.S.S.R., the first to profess his vows as a Redemptorist in America!

During his first year as a Redemptorist, Fr. John Neumann baptized 94 people at St. James Church,

Baltimore where this editor spent his first four years of ministry. When looking over the old baptism records with a fellow Redemptorist in the early 1970's while at St. James, we came upon the name of Fr. John Neumann as the baptizing priest. It made a wonderful impression on me as another 'brand new' Redemptorist priest to know that my name would be entered in the same column where Fr. John Neumann's name was many years before.

May St. John Neumann continue to inspire many others to follow the Lord faithfully in answering the call to the consecrated life in our world today.



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MASSES
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SATURDAY VIGIL MASS.....5:00 PM
WEEKDAYS.....7:30 AM, 12:15, and 5:30 PM

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
Monday - Saturday.....8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

NOVENA SERVICES (*With Mass and Blessing of the Sick*)
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Sunday.....3:30 PM

FIRST SATURDAYS - MORNING OF REFLECTION
For Women Religious.....9:30 AM
Fatima Vigil.....12:00 Noon - 3PM

CONFESSIONS
Monday - Friday.....12:00 Noon & 5:15 PM
Saturday.....12:00 Noon & 4:30 - 5:00 PM