

January 5, 2021

Good Morning All,

Today's Saint was a mover and a shaker! He is another well known supporter of Catholic education, responsible for establishing the first diocesan school system and opening on average a new church once a month! (Source: January 2021 Magnificat)

Tonight is the Parish Mission on Prudence - still time to prepare for the presentation by Mr. Kyle Clement.

1. Today's Readings: [Memorial of Saint John Neumann, Bishop | USCCB](#)

2. ***The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus:*** Memorial of Saint John Neumann, Bishop
Well-known for his holiness and learning, spiritual writing and preaching, on October 13, 1963, John Neumann became the first American bishop to be beatified. Canonized in 1977, he is buried in St. Peter the Apostle Church in Philadelphia.

FORMED video related to St. John Neumann

[East Coast Shrines: National Shrine of St John Nepomucene Neumann - FORMED](#)

St. John Neumann, pray for us!


3. Quote of the Day:

“Everyone who breathes, high and low, educated and ignorant, young and old, man and woman, has a mission, has a work. We are not sent into this world for nothing; we are not born at random; we are not here, that we may go to bed at night, and get up in the morning, toil for our bread, eat and drink, laugh and joke, sin when we have a mind, and reform when we are tired of sinning, rear a family and die. God sees every one of us; He creates every soul, . . . for a purpose. He needs, He deigns to need, every one of us. He has an end for each of us; we are all equal in His sight, and we are placed in our different ranks and stations, not to get what we can out of them for ourselves, but to labor in them for Him. As Christ has His work, we too have ours; as He rejoiced to do His work, we must rejoice in ours also.” (St. John Neumann, from the sermon: “God’s Will the End of Life”)

A very powerful quote from St. John Neumann! You can hear him directing people to get things done, to get moving, to give back!

On a sad note, we were informed yesterday that Fr. Ernie Hepner who spent some time with us years ago passed away on December 31st. He was 89. A servant of God for over 50 years. The majority of his time was spent in Cleveland, Ohio. If you are

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interested in sending a condolence card or attending the funeral, information is attached. Please pray for the repose of the soul of Fr. Hepner. 

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It is with deep sadness that I inform you of the death of Rev. Ernest Charles Hepner. Father Hepner passed away Thursday, December 31st at the age of 89.

All liturgies will be held at St. Mary Help of Christians Catholic Church, 138 Fairfield Street SE, Aiken, South Carolina. A vigil service will be held on Tuesday, January 5 at 6:30 p.m. followed by a visitation. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Wednesday, January 6 at 11:00 a.m.

Messages of condolence may be sent to:

Julius (Butch) Hepner
500 5th St
Fairport Harbor, Ohio 44077

ST. JOHN NEPOMUCENE NEUMANN



The new Bishop of Philadelphia had just about had it with the unfair treatment of Catholic students in the public school system of his city. In middle 1800s, school boards, administrators, and teachers were mostly Protestant and forced their beliefs on all the students. Catholic children were pressured (often with whippings) to read the Protestant Bible and participate in Protestant worship services in their schools.

Bishop John Neumann worked hard to change this practice in the Diocese of Philadelphia. In some cases, it took lawsuits; in others, he built schools and organized a diocesan school system in 1852. Even so, he was not a particularly popular bishop and faced discouragement when enemies burned down the convents and schools he built.

It seems that disappointment may have been a way of life for John Nepomucene Neumann, who was born in 1811 in Bohemia (part of the Austrian Empire then and today the Czech Republic). As a young man he entered the seminary and prepared to be a priest. Just before his ordination, the local bishop decided Bohemia had too many priests and no more would be ordained. John contacted other diocese throughout Europe, but they all had the same problem . . . too many priests.

There was one place in the world that needed priests. Immigrants flocked to the United States searching for a better life. Many of these immigrants were Catholic, and there were not enough priests to minister to them. The 25-year-old John headed for the United States. He walked from Bohemia to France, where he

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boarded a ship bound for the United States. When he arrived in New York, the pockets of his worn black suit were empty except for one dollar, but Bishop John Dubois of New York was happy to see him. John was ordained in 1836 and went to minister among the German-speaking people of Buffalo, where he helped build churches and log schools.

He was the first priest in the United States to make vows with the Redemptorist Order, which he did in Baltimore in 1842. He became a U.S. citizen in 1848.

Although John studied six languages in the seminary, his English was difficult to understand. This frustrated many people, and when he was appointed the fourth bishop of the sophisticated Philadelphia Diocese at the age of 41, people were unhappy. These privileged people were accustomed to professional and polished leaders. On top of that, by his own admission, John was not a very good administrator. He did not care for the details of finances, personnel, and legal battles over who owned diocesan land. Things began to look up, however, when Rome sent him an assistant bishop who had been a banker.

John worked hard in several areas. First, he helped immigrants feel comfortable in their new home. He provided parishes where they could worship in their native languages and he gave them food, clothing, and housekeeping items when they could not afford their own. He helped the Sisters of Notre Dame establish themselves in the United States. The Notre Dames' taught in Baltimore, Pittsburgh, New York, Buffalo, and Philadelphia. Education was always dear to John's heart. He built Catholic schools, organized Catholic school boards, and assigned Catholic teachers to these schools. During the time he was bishop, schools in his diocese grew from one to 200, and enrollment boosted from 500 Catholic school students to 9,000.

John worked hard and tirelessly. This may be in part the cause of his death on January 5, 1860, at the age of 48. He crumpled to the snow a few blocks away from his Philadelphia cathedral. Priests rushed to him with oils, but he was already dead. He is buried in a glass crypt under the main altar of St. Peter's Church in Philadelphia.

In 1977, Pope Paul VI declared him a saint, and he is the patron of immigrants and sick children.

John never lost his love and concern for the people -- something that may have bothered the elite of Philadelphia. On one visit to a rural parish, the parish priest picked him up in a manure wagon. Seated on a plank stretched over the wagon's contents, John joked, "Have you ever seen such an entourage for a bishop!"

The ability to learn languages that had brought him to America led him to learn Spanish, French, Italian, and Dutch so he could hear confessions in at least six languages. When Irish immigration started, he learned Gaelic so well that one Irish woman remarked, "Isn't it grand that we have an Irish bishop!"

Once on a visit to Germany, he came back to the house he was staying in soaked by rain. When his host suggested he change his shoes, John remarked, "The only way I could change my shoes is by putting the left one on the right foot and the right one on the left foot. This is the only pair I own."

Sources: catholic.org and saintsresource.com