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Alleged Apparitions of Our Lady of America Not Supernatural

Bishop Rhoades,
Archbishops Schnurr and
Vigneron, and Bishops
Olmsted, Doherty and
Thomas

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, and five other bishops have concluded that alleged apparitions of Our Lady of America — said to have taken place more than six decades ago — were not of supernatural origin. While private devotion inspired by reports of the apparitions could continue without harm to the faith, Bishop Rhoades said, it would not be appropriate for

“They are more to be described as subjective inner religious experiences rather than objective external visions and revelations.”

any sort of public devotion. The investigation concerned numerous apparitions reported by Sister Mary Ephrem Neuzil, a Sister of the Most Precious Blood of Jesus of Dayton, Ohio, between 1956 and 1959. At the time, it was reported that Mary had appeared to Sister Neuzil and had identified herself as Our Lady of America. Sister Neuzil died in 2000. Both before and after the reported apparitions, she said she had other communications or locutions from Mary that took place in several dioceses. Concurring with the conclusion reached by Bishop Rhoades were five other bishops from the dioceses where Sister Neuzil had stayed during this period: Archbishops Dennis M. Schnurr of Cincinnati and Allen H. Vigneron of Detroit and Bishops Thomas J. Olmsted of Phoenix, Timothy L. Doherty of Lafayette, Indiana, and Daniel E. Thomas of Toledo, Ohio. In an interview with Catholic News Service, Bishop Rhoades said he had agreed to a request by the other five bishops to form a commission of six theologians and canonists to investigate the apparitions. He was chosen as the lead bishop of the commission because the alleged apparitions began in Rome City, Indiana, which is in his diocese. The bishops' statement follows.

the undersigned bishops issue the following statement in our capacity as the bishops of the dioceses where alleged visions, locutions and private revelations were said to have occurred in relation to the devotion to Our Lady of America, the Immaculate Virgin.

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