

**BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF  
OUR LADY OF AMERICA STATUE  
PRESENTLY RESIDING AT  
ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CHURCH  
THIBODAUX, LOUISIANA**

A statue of Our Lady of America was brought to Thibodaux, Louisiana from Fostoria, Ohio on October 20, 2019. It is one of the few statues officially designed and approved by the visionary of the apparitions of Our Lady of America, Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil, before her death in the year 2000. While creating the 300 lb., 5 ft. statue, the artist, Donna Mae Halstead, had direct, verbal and written communication with Sister Mildred, and designed the statue according to Sister's detailed specifications of the apparitions, which are described in the diary of Our Lady of America. This particular statue of Our Lady of America is known as the Youth World Day Statue. It has been processed in many states throughout the United States, and was on tour in Canada as well. In 1993, it was processed and venerated at Youth World Day in Denver, Colorado, and blessed at that time by St. Pope John Paul II. In 2002, the statue was processed at Youth World Day in Toronto, Canada. Other examples of tours and processions over the years, occurred at several Marian Conferences, processed on three separate occasions at the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington DC, and was venerated at Mother Angelica's Shrine in Hanceville, Alabama.

From October 20, 2019 to May 1, 2020, this particular statue of Our Lady of America resided and was venerated in the home of Cheryl Ann Breau in Thibodaux, Louisiana. It was blessed during that time by Rev. Van Constant and Rev. Patrick Riviere from the Houma/Thibodaux Diocese. A procession of the statue occurred at the St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans on October 26, 2019, at which time the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass was officiated by Rev. Scott Daniels.

On May 1, 2020 the statue of Our Lady of America was consecrated in the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church by Rev. Mitchel Semar of the Houma/Thibodaux Diocese. The church is located on the Nicholas State University Campus in Thibodaux, Louisiana, where the statue resides to this day.

**From:** john PALUMBO  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 23, 2020 2:32 PM  
**To:** cherylbreau@bellsouth.net  
**Subject:** Our Lady of America World Youth Day Statue

Here are some details I found lets pray for Our Lady's Bishops  
Sincerely John Palumbo

**1992: California woman sculpts a 4 foot statue of Our Lady of America and flames an endless promotion effort**

Mrs. Donna Mae Halsted of Meadow Vista, CA, sculpted a 300 lb. 4 foot statue of Our Lady of America, a 19 inch statue and a painting of Our Lady of America according to the specifications given her by Sr. Mary Ephrem which were then approved by Sr. Mary Ephrem herself. The statue was created for the youth of northern California to carry in World Youth Day 1993 in Denver, CO, and in other devotional processions and ceremonies throughout the country. In the early 1990s, committees to promote the devotion to Our Lady of America were set up in the West, the New England area, the East and Midwest and the South to promote the devotion slowly and deeply according to Archbishop Leibold's direction.

**1993: California youth process the statue of Our Lady of America in World Youth Day in Denver, CO**

The statue created in the previous year by Mrs. Halsted is processed in Denver's World Youth Day at the Papal Mass in Cherry Creek Park on August 15, 1993, and in many other Pro-Life and Eucharistic and Rosary Congresses in the California area.

- **July 1993: First Wednesday Mass with Fr. Siro Dal Degan and talks on Our Lady of America at St. Philomene's Church, Sacramento, CA**
- **September, 1993: First Wednesday Mass in honor of St. Joseph at St. Mary's Church, Sacramento, CA**
- **1993 Sacred Heart Cenacle, Stockton, CA: Marian and Youth Conference where youth give their World Youth Day testimonies on Our Lady of America and place paper roses at the feet of her statue at the close of Mass**
- **October, 1993: Marian Conference in Minnesota to which promoters were invited after a youth gave the Diary he received at World Youth Day to his Third Order Carmelite mother**
- **October, 1993: Northwest Eucharistic Marian Conference, Lacey, Washington, with youth Torchbearers of the Queen from Colfax, CA**

- December 5, 1993: Talks on Our Lady of America, Pleasanton, CA
- December 7, 1993: Our Lady of America statue is taken to the Magnificat Catholic Women's Luncheon in Aptos, CA

January 5, 1994:

Audrey Frank speaks on Our Lady of America and Pro-Life issues at the Poor Clares' St. Joseph Monastery.

June 19-26, 1994: National Rosary Congress and Year of the Family at the National Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC

Fr. Lionel Pare and the Fatima Blue Army invited the Torchbearers of the Queen Youth, St. Dominic's, California, to a Rosary procession of the 1993 World Youth Day 300 pound statue of Our Lady of America around the Basilica. It was then placed at the altar and remained there throughout the week-long ceremony. Father Pare remains a cherished friend and long time devotee to Our Lady of America. This is Our Lady of America's SECOND PROCESSION at the National Shrine. (on video)

1994: The devotion is promoted all around the country

- January - February, 1994: Pilgrim statue visits/talks are hosted in the New England area by Fr. Smolenski at St. Martha's, Enfield, CT, and by New England Third Order Marist Laity, along with Fr. Jack Meade and Sr. Benita and Sr. Zita of the Marist Sisters.

- Visits and talks are hosted in Maryland and Washington, D.C. area by Mr. Michelle Pawlowski, President of National Polish American Congress.

- Statue visits and talks by Audrey Frank included Gaithersburg, MD; Mt. St. Mary's, Emmitsburg, MD, welcomed by Msgr. Hugh Phillips, Potomac, MD; Rosary Cenacle, GOSPA prayer meeting Holy Hour and blessing by Fr. Kazimer Chwalek held at the Convent Chapel of the Oblates of the Blessed Sacrament in Washington, D.C. (where a young cloistered sister said it was through Our Lady of America and Sister Mary Ephrem that she found her vocation, and that she prays daily for the fulfillment of Our Lady of America's desires).

- Presentation to St. Mary's youth group, Rockville, Maryland.

- March 25, 1994 Procession, crowning, consecration St. Dominic's, Colfax, CA

1994 Youth for Life NATIONAL YOUTH DAY REUNION  
ANCE: American & Canadian Youth reunite after World Youth Day

for a Marian Conference in Prayer, Adoration, and Torchbearers of the Queen process 300 pound statue of Our Lady of America with Youth for Life image of Our Lady of Guadalupe during the Pro Life 6 mile Rosary & Divine Mercy walk to Denver abortion clinic.

- June 1995 - Holy Innocents Pro Life Mass/Rosary and talk

- St. Philomene's Church, Sacramento, CA - Youth Procession, rosary, Mass, and Pro Life & Our Lady of America talk.

- July 1995 - Fr. Orbis, Divine Word Missionary, Retreat & Mass at St. Charles Borromeo Church, Sacramento, CA (Large Pilgrim Statue) Youth gather signatures on petitions.

- October 13, 1995 - Holy Innocents, Pro Life Rosary & Mass celebrated by Bishop Weigand

- St. Philomene's Church - Youth process 300 lb. Statue of Our Lady of America, Rosary, Mass and Pro Life talk.

- November 27, 1995 - Mary's Peace Mass, St. Charles Borromeo, Sacramento, CA. Northern California youth groups process Our Lady of America and lead Rosary/Divine Mercy Chaplet, followed by Mass. Music by St. Rose's Life Teen Music Group, Roseville, California

Sacred Heart Cenacle Rosary at the Sacramento Croatian Center. Large Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of America brought by CA Torchbearers of the Queen.

- 1997- Youth 2000 Eucharistic 3 Day Retreat, St. Rose Church, Roseville, CA. Crowning of Our Lady of America by Youth.

- Oakland, CA Holiness Conference. St. Joseph Communications, Mother Angelica, Our Lady of America and World Youth Day talks (video) were presented to youth of all ages at 3 day Youth Conference. Focus on St. Joseph and 1st Wednesday devotion. The large Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of America is displayed at the Main Conference with Mass, Rosary, Divine Mercy, Mother Angelica.

Maybe of Interest \*\*Sister Mary Benita, SMSM, traveled home to New Orleans to personally visit retired Archbishop Philip Hannan and the Archbishop of New Orleans concerning the importance of Our Lady of America and the message of sanctification from within. Sister had written her Provincial about possibly relocating Marists from Massachusetts to help at the Our Lady of America Center. Sister begged all from her deathbed to help Our Lady of America's cause. She united her black and white friends alike for Our Lady of America's cause until her death in 2001. At her wake tearful mourners told of how she could only speak of Our Lady of America



until her last breath. She told Kenneth Ryan, Head Knight of Columbus for Marian Affairs (CN) to aid Our Lady of America in all ways.\*\*

- September 1998 - Sacramento Marian Conference Memorial Auditorium. Torchbearers of the Queen bring the large Statue of Our Lady of America. Bishop Richard Garcia is the celebrant.

- September 1998 - Fresno Marian Conference, Radisson Hotel. Torchbearers bring the large Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of America.

St. Rose Church, Roseville, CA Youth Eucharistic 3 day Retreat - Our Lady of America is crowned by the youth

October 2 – December 22, 2001:

The large pilgrim statue of Our Lady of America is taken on a 3 month tour around the country, stopping at the National Basilica for the Week of Prayer to end abortion, the third time the statue is processed at the Basilica

The 4 foot statue of Our Lady of America was taken on a 3 month tour throughout America by California resident Audrey Frank and her children. It was brought to the National Shrine for the Day of Prayer and Fasting to end abortion just a month after 9/11. Michael Brown spoke on Our Lady of America at this event and materials and petitions were made available to the public. This is the statue that has been carried in all World Youth Days since 1993 and many other Conferences and events. It was featured on the cover of the Richmond diocesan newspaper after the World Youth Day in Canada. Its travels on this tour include the following:

- Saint Paul's Church, Sandwich, IL.
- National Week of Prayer and Fasting at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC.
- Ground Zero - following 9/11/2001.
- Marist Sisters Convent, Newton, Massachusetts. Mass celebrated by Fr. Walter Abbott, S.J., Espousal Retreat Center, Waltham, MA.
- Fr. Tom Di Lorenzo - Charismatic Mass & a Radio Interview, St. Mary's Church Center, Piscataway, Maryland.
- St. John Bosco TeleConference, Woodstock, Virginia.
- The pilgrim statue was taken to the John Paul II Conference of Christian Spirituality in Jacksonville, Florida.

- At Thanksgiving time, Mother Angelica brought Our Lady of America's statue into her private cloister chapel and Collin Donovan, EWTN Theologian, introduced Our Lady of America to the EWTN board.
- Archbishop Flores granted permission to Anna Jimenez to have the statue of Our Lady of America brought to St. Therese, the Little Flower's Mission Church, San Antonio, Texas. It was then taken to St. Dominic's Church in San Antonio. There was a living rosary and fiesta.
- The statue was invited to the Marian Conference by Mimi Kelly of the Mir Prayer Group in Louisiana.
- The Marian Helpers Radio Program featured Our Lady of America and Sr. Mary Ephrem on their program.
- Archbishop Phillip Hannan's Focus Television did a 60 Minute special on Sr. Mary Ephrem's life and the messages of Our Lady of America.

2002: Lay theologian Hugh Owens helps promote the devotion

Hugh Owens, lay theologian associated with the John Paul II Institute in Jacksonville, Florida, began writing and speaking to promote the devotion to Our Lady of America.

2002: World Youth Day in Toronto, Canada

Youth from California, Maryland and other areas of the country carry the 300 pound Pilgrim statue of Our Lady of America in the World Youth Day in Canada. The Richmond diocesan newspaper carried a picture of these young people processing Our Lady on the cover of their paper.

**Our Lady of America Youth World Day Statue ..... Continued**

**By: Cheryl Ann Breaux**

**Date: August 20, 2023**

**October 20, 2019**

**Our Lady of America Youth Day Statue arrived in Thibodaux, Louisiana from Fostoria, Ohio. At that time the statue was blessed by Rev. Van Constant of the Houma/Thibodaux Diocese.**

**October 26, 2019**

**Our Lady of America Youth Day Statue was processed at the St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans, Louisiana. The Holy Mass was celebrated by Rev. Scott Daniels.**

**December 18, 2019**

**Bishop Shelton Fabre was informed and given documents of the statue residing in his Diocese of Houma/Thibodaux.**

**February 19,**

**2020The statue was blessed by Rev. Patrick Riviere of the Houma/Thibodaux Diocese and venerated in a private home until May 1, 2020.**

**May 1, 2020 – Present**

**On the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker, May 1, 2020, Our Lady of America Youth Day Statue was consecrated in the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church on the Nicholls State University campus in Thibodaux, Louisiana by Rev. Mitchel Semar of the Houma/Thibodaux Diocese, where the statue presently resides.**