

Our Lady of America: A Providential Opportunity Toward a More Illuminating Analysis

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Introduction

Five years after the conclusion of the investigation into the alleged apparitions of Our Lady of America, the Church issued new procedural norms and classifications for the discernment of alleged supernatural phenomena. These new norms present an opportunity to reexamine the case – this time, with a more coherent methodology and more precise categories for assessing the mystical phenomena experienced by Sister Mildred Neuzil. The investigative commission’s 2019 conclusion (which neither approves nor condemns the events, leaving the door open for reinvestigation) is problematic in two ways. *First*, it seems to conflate two different forms of perception – inner vision and spiritual vision – thus precluding a proper assessment of the phenomena. To avoid such confusion, this case calls for a methodology with the degree of precision modeled by Benedict XVI in his commentary on the Third Secret of Fatima. Not only did he clearly define the different forms of perception, he also thoroughly explained, anthropologically and psychologically, what constitutes an apparition, and how to discern its authenticity as its full depth of meaning unfolds over time. *Second*, the investigative commission’s conclusion overreaches in categorizing as “doctrinal error” a theological difficulty in need of clarification, thus derailing their discernment process. Many sound refutations have already been published defending the theological construct in question, but another significant consideration bears

mentioning: its ecumenical value. A reinvestigation correcting these issues could ultimately result, under the new norms, in the classification *nihil obstat* – potentially releasing unprecedented graces of conversion.

When Bishop Kevin Rhoades et al. concluded the investigation into the alleged apparitions of Our Lady of America to Sister Mildred Neuzil in 2019, the commission left the door open for further evaluation. The conclusion – *non constat de supernaturalitate*,¹ based upon the 1978 norms for discernment – neither condemns nor approves the events.² Providentially, the Church’s new procedural norms and classifications for the discernment of such phenomena (effective May 19, 2024)³ present a twofold opportunity to reinvestigate the case – applying not only the new norms, but also, a more coherent methodology. The primary problem with the commission’s 2019 findings lies in the method of assessing mystical phenomena; the categories implemented lack the necessary theological precision.⁴ A secondary problem lies in categorizing as “doctrinal error” a locution more accurately described as a theological difficulty in need

¹ It is not confirmed to be of supernatural origin.

² Bishop Kevin Rhoades, “Singular Decree,” July 29, 2019, <https://www.ourladyofamerica.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/SINGULAR-DECREE-Sr.-Mildred-Neuzil-CPPS-with-signatures.pdf>

³ Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Norms for Proceeding in the Discernment of Alleged Supernatural Phenomena,” May 17, 2024, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_ddd_doc_20240517_norme-fenomeni-soprannaturali_en.html

⁴ This discernment calls for the incomparable degree of precision found in Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger’s “Theological Commentary on the Third Secret of Fatima,” in Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Documents regarding ‘The Message of Fatima,’” June 26, 2000, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000626_message-fatima_en.html

of clarification. The following commentary explores the validity and integrity of the investigation, in light of these problems.

The primary problem

The study's categories—"subjective inner religious experiences" versus "objective external visions and revelations"⁵—are inaccurately defined. The juxtaposed adjectives – subjective versus objective, and inner versus external – are so lacking in analytical rigor that they cause confusion, precluding a proper assessment of the phenomena.

Bishop Rhoades's Singular Decree cites pages 128 and 130-132 of Fr. Benedict Groeschel's *A Still Small Voice* as evidence that Sister Neuzil's experiences exclude the possibility of "objective private revelation,"⁶ concluding that

Sister Neuzil herself describes her experience as 'inner vision', and we find that her experiences were of a type where her own imagination and intellect were involved in the formation of the events. ... [W]e do not find evidence that these were objective visions and revelations of the type seen at Guadalupe, Fatima and Lourdes."⁷

This conclusion, as stated, is somewhat incoherent; it seems to conflate two types of perception, both of which Sister

⁵ Bishop Kevin Rhoades, "Singular Decree."

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

Neuzil experienced: *inner vision* (private revelation) and *spiritual vision* (religious experience). The statement, in fact, directly contradicts Fr. Groeschel's own use of the term *inner vision* in reference to apparitions; on page 51 of the same book, he described the approved apparitions of Our Lady of Lourdes to Saint Bernadette Soubirous as "inner visions."⁸ And in contrast to the categories used in the Singular Decree, Fr. Groeschel's distinction between these two types of phenomena was not "objective" versus "subjective," but rather, "not primarily subjective" versus "highly subjective."⁹ These very same nuances were explicated in thorough detail by Benedict XVI in his "Theological Commentary on the Third Secret of Fatima," eliminating any such confusion.

Benedict XVI categorized approved apparitions such as those at Lourdes and Fatima as inner visions involving a certain necessary degree of subjectivity.¹⁰ In clarifying the anthropological/psychological structure and character of private revelations, he first noted three forms of perception: sensible/bodily vision, inner/interior vision, and spiritual vision. The first form, *sensible/bodily vision*, refers to "normal exterior perception of the senses."¹¹ The second form, *inner vision*, refers to the phenomena of private revelation (e.g., the apparitions of Lourdes and Fatima). The third form, *spiritual vision*, comprises the classical division of spiritual perception (i.e., corporeal, imaginative, and intellectual). His delineation of these categories offers the necessary precision for

⁸ Benedict J. Groeschel, CFR, *A Still Small Voice: A Practical Guide on Reported Revelations* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), 51.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 128, 130.

¹⁰ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, "Theological Commentary."

¹¹ *Ibid.*

discerning a case such as this one, in which both *inner vision* and *spiritual vision* were reported. He emphasized,

It is clear that in the visions [and apparitions¹²] of Lourdes, Fatima and other places it is not a question of normal exterior perception of the senses: the images and forms which are seen are not located spatially, as is the case for example with a tree or a house. This is perfectly obvious, for instance, as regards the vision of hell (described in the first part of the Fatima “secret”) or even the vision described in the third part of the “secret”. But the same can be very easily shown with regard to other visions, especially since not everybody present saw them, but only the “visionaries”. It is also clear that it is not a matter of a “vision” in the mind, without images, as occurs at the higher levels of mysticism. Therefore we are dealing with the middle category, interior perception [i.e., inner vision]. For the visionary, this perception certainly has the force of a presence, equivalent for that person to an external manifestation to the senses.¹³

The investigative commission finds “that [Sister Neuzil’s] experiences were of a type where her own imagination and

¹² Benedict XVI clarified in an interview on the flight to Portugal on May 11, 2010 that these comments published in his “Theological Commentary” in 2000 referred not only to visions within apparitions, but also to the apparitions themselves. (See “Interview of the Holy Father Benedict XVI with the Journalists during the Flight to Portugal,” Papal Flight, May 11, 2010, https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2010/may/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20100511_portogallo-interview.html.)

¹³ Ratzinger, “Theological Commentary.”

intellect were involved in the formation of the events.”¹⁴ Yet, referring to the apparition of Our Lady of Fatima, Benedict XVI explained,

“Interior vision” is ... a true and valid means of verification. But it also has its limitations. Even in exterior vision the subjective element is always present. We do not see the pure object, but it comes to us through the filter of our senses, which carry out a work of translation. This is still more evident in the case of interior vision, especially when it involves features which in themselves transcend our horizon. The subject, the visionary, is still more powerfully involved. He sees insofar as he is able, in the modes of representation and consciousness available to him. In the case of interior vision, the process of translation is even more extensive than in exterior vision, for the subject shares in an essential way in the formation of the image of what appears. He can arrive at the image only within the bounds of his capacities and possibilities. Such visions therefore are never simple “photographs” of the other world, but are influenced by the potentialities and limitations of the perceiving subject.

... The images ... are ... the result of a real perception of a higher and interior origin. But neither should they be thought of as if for a moment the veil of the other world were drawn back, with heaven appearing in its pure essence.... Rather the images are, in a manner of speaking, a synthesis of the

¹⁴ Bishop Kevin Rhoades, “Singular Decree.”

impulse coming from on high and the capacity to receive this impulse in the visionaries.... For this reason the figurative language of the visions is symbolic. ... The central element of the image is revealed where it coincides with what is the focal point of Christian prophecy itself: the center is found where the vision becomes a summons and a guide to the will of God.¹⁵

Ten years later, Pope Benedict XVI reiterated,

In 2000, in my presentation, I said that an apparition – a supernatural impulse which does not come purely from a person’s imagination but really from the Virgin Mary, from the supernatural – that such an impulse enters into a subject and is expressed according to the capacities of that subject. The subject is determined by his or her historical, personal, temperamental conditions, and so translates the great supernatural impulse into his or her own capabilities for seeing, imagining, expressing; yet these expressions, shaped by the subject, conceal a content which is greater, which goes deeper, and only in the course of history can we see the full depth, which was – let us say – “clothed” in this vision that was accessible to specific individuals.¹⁶

¹⁵ Ratzinger, “Theological Commentary.”

¹⁶ “Interview of the Holy Father Benedict XVI with the Journalists during the Flight to Portugal,” Papal Flight, May 11, 2010, https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2010/may/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20100511_portogallo-interview.html

Also in this statement, Benedict XVI touched on another criterion for discernment of private revelation: whether prophecy stands the test of time. The full depth of Sister Neuzil's overall message has begun to emerge, as current events and developments in the Church and in the world unfold. By way of example, the very same lamentations and remedies that Sister Neuzil allegedly received from Jesus and Mary from 1954 to 1984 were expressed by Benedict XVI in his 2019 essay, "The Church and the Scandal of Sexual Abuse." The remedy, he emphasized, is our penetration into and co-operation with the Divine Indwelling:

Only obedience and love for our Lord Jesus Christ can point the way. So let us first try to understand anew and *from within* what the Lord wants and *has wanted* with us. ... [T]he Lord has initiated a narrative of love with us and wants to subsume all creation in it. The counterforce against evil, which threatens us and the whole world, can ultimately only consist in our *entering into* this love. It is the real counterforce against evil.¹⁷

His essay clearly reinforces the prophetic content of Sister Neuzil's messages.

Although she experienced a variety of mystical phenomena, two or three of her encounters more closely demonstrate the marks of an *inner vision* (i.e., an apparition) than a *spiritual*

¹⁷ Benedict XVI, "Full Text of Benedict XVI Essay," *Catholic News Agency*, April 10, 2019, <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/41013/full-text-of-benedict-xvi-essay-the-church-and-the-scandal-of-sexual-abuse>

vision. This becomes clear through a closer look at what constitutes true and false spiritual visions. Venerable John G. Arinterro, OP explained the difference between an authentic (“divine”) and a false *spiritual vision*:

In themselves the divine visions are usually shorter and clearer, passing like a lightning flash.... False visions, on the other hand, are more or less provoked by the soul itself. They last for a long time and they can be prolonged and examined with curiosity. But they are incomparably less clear and noble and, in spite of their long duration, they leave the soul disturbed and doubtful, disquieted, fickle, proud, and in bad humor.¹⁸

Using these criteria, the alleged appearance of “Our Lady of America” on September 26, 1956 – first during the Community thanksgiving after Mass (from which Sister Neuzil had to excuse herself, out of obedience, to tend to her duties) and then in her room (“She was there waiting for me”)¹⁹ -- was neither a divine nor a false *spiritual vision*. Rather, it more closely fit Benedict XVI’s description of an

¹⁸ Venerable John G. Arinterro, OP, *The Mystical Evolution in the Development and Vitality of the Church, Volume Two*, trans. Jordan Aumann, OP (St. Louis: Herder Book Company, reprinted by TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., Rockford, IL, 1978), 315.

It is of note that Arinterro – like Benedict XVI and Sister Neuzil – was convinced that a serious study of the Divine Indwelling, which by and large had been “utterly forgotten,” constituted “the fulfillment of the needs and the correct remedy for the emergencies of our time ... so that [the faithful] can appreciate, experience, and live as they ought, the life which Jesus brought us from heaven” (John Arinterro, *Mystical Evolution Volume One*, 38-39).

¹⁹ Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil, *Our Lady of America*, February 2, 1960, reprinted with new messages October 7, 1993, 11.

inner vision (apparition). (This event also calls to mind Our Lady of Guadalupe’s interception of Saint Juan Diego as he sought a priest to minister to his failing uncle.)²⁰ Likewise, the experience of October 13, 1956 and perhaps also that of September 27, 1956 align more closely with *inner visions* (apparitions) than *spiritual visions*.²¹

As noted by the investigative commission, Sister Neuzil did experience various forms of *spiritual vision* in support of her sanctification and her mission for the renewal of souls and the sanctification of the family. However, based on the above considerations, certain of Sister Neuzil’s encounters – particularly the *inner visions* of “Our Lady of America” on September 26 and 27 and October 13, 1956 – could be understood as having the character of apparitions. This calls for a new investigation implementing Benedict XVI’s more rigorous categories and definitions.

The secondary problem

The conclusion that one of Sister Neuzil’s locutions contains doctrinal error is an overreach which ultimately derails the discernment process. The Singular Decree states that the alleged words of Saint Joseph in early October 1956 -- describing his unique role in salvation history -- “must be seen as an error” because this “...claim regarding Saint Joseph ... has never been expressed as Catholic doctrine ... namely, that he was a ‘co-redeemer’ with Christ for the

²⁰ Diana von Glahn, “Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe, Part I of III,” December 10, 2013, <https://spiritualdirection.com/2013/12/10/juan-diego-lady-guadalupe-part-i-iii>.

²¹ Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil, *Our Lady of America*, 12, 14.

salvation of the world.”²² With the many sound arguments that have been published refuting this conclusion, another significant consideration bears mentioning: the ecumenical value of the locution, properly understood.

The whole of the locution from which the statement of concern was extracted is theologically grounded in Saint Joseph’s office within the order of the hypostatic union. Indeed, it aligns with Saint John Paul II’s Apostolic Exhortation, *Redemptoris Custos*.²³ With this papal document, John Paul II not only synthesized the Josephology of early Church Fathers, Doctors of the Church, and Popes – he developed it further. He also satisfied an ecumenical problem that ensued from Chapter 8 of *Lumen Gentium*, which focused on Mary’s role in the economy of salvation *to the exclusion of Saint Joseph*.²⁴

Thus, it would be more accurate to describe the locution not as an error, but as a theological construct most worthy of further evaluation. If the main concern is ecumenical, the investigative commission should be made aware that Protestant theologians have argued in favor of bringing into prominence the role of Joseph. In his article, “Mary and Joseph in the Apostolic Exhortation *Redemptoris Custos*,”

²² Bishop Kevin Rhoades, “Singular Decree.”

²³ John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Redemptoris Custos*, August 15, 1989, n. 7-8, 20-21, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_15081989_redemptoris-custos.html

²⁴ See James J. Davis, OP, “Mary and Joseph in the Apostolic Exhortation: *Redemptoris Custos*,” *Marian Studies* vol. 42, Article 10 (1991), 135–136, 168-170, https://ecommons.udayton.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1274&context=marian_studies

James J. Davis, OP asserted that one of the effects of Saint John Paul II's proclamation was

...to rectify a misunderstanding deriving from [the omission of Saint Joseph in] Chapter 8 of *Lumen Gentium* of Vatican II, where Mary's role in the history of salvation is developed in such a manner as to give the impression, especially to Bible-literate non-Catholics, that she was not a married woman, and, by failing even to mention St. Joseph, the Council may have risked dehumanizing Mary, while exalting her prerogatives, privileges and importance. ... I refer particularly to a 1966 critique by Jean-Jacques von Allmen of the Reformed Church.

He writes: Now let us pass on to two questions concerning chapter VIII of *Lumen Gentium*, on the Roman Catholic Marian doctrine, as it is at present. The first concerns terminology. It seems to me to be lacking in rigor....The second question concerns the total absence of Joseph. This omission, particularly palpable in §§ 56 and 57, where there is mention of Elizabeth, the shepherds, the magi, Simeon -- seems to me to be serious especially for Christology... [W]hen one sets Joseph aside, or when one ignores him, is this not tearing Jesus away from his Jewishness, and by this fact compromising his messianity, and perhaps even his historicity? ... To ignore Joseph, is this not, implicitly, to alter the mission of Jesus of Nazareth? ...

Another Protestant theologian, Karl Barth, has been quoted as saying, "If I were a Roman Catholic theologian, I would lift Joseph up. He took care of the Child; he takes care of the Church."²⁵

Indeed, since Vatican II, the role of Saint Joseph *has* been brought into greater prominence with each pontificate. Pope Francis completed Saint John XXIII's insertion of the name of Joseph into the Eucharistic Prayers. More recently -- in fact, subsequent to the Singular Decree -- he formalized what Saint John Paul II had proclaimed in *Redemptoris Custos*, adding to the Litany of Saint Joseph the invocations, "Guardian of the Redeemer," "Servant of Christ," and "Minister of Salvation."²⁶ And his Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde* can be understood as building upon Benedict XVI's explanation of how the faithful become, "according to God's design...

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Shortly thereafter, a faith formation program associated with the Assumptionists explained these titles: "Joseph is, in essence, *a servant*, not only of Jesus, but also of the entire cause of salvation. Through his care of Jesus, he ministers to, provides for, and enables all of salvation history to unfold in the person of Jesus. Granted, this is a rather complicated theological construct. ... In fulfilling [his] role [as protector of the Savior], Joseph also served the greater cause of salvation. Thus, he became a minister to salvation itself." (See Pflaum Faith Formation Program, "Saint Joseph: Minister of Salvation," *Gospel Weeklies*, June 14, 2021, <https://www.pflaumweeklies.com/saint-joseph-minister-of-salvation/>.)

redeemers with the Redeemer,”²⁷ imitating Saint Paul in Col 1:24.²⁸ Pope Francis proclaimed,

Saint Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation. . . .

In every situation, Joseph declared his own “fiat”, like those of Mary at the Annunciation and Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. . . . All this makes it clear that “Saint Joseph was called by God to serve the person and mission of Jesus directly through the exercise of his fatherhood” and that in this way, “he cooperated

²⁷ Benedict XVI, “Blessing of the Sick,” Papal Mass at the Esplanade of the Shrine of Our Lady of Fátima, May 13, 2010, https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20100513_fatima.html.

In this, he echoed Saint John Paul II’s Apostolic Letter *Salvifici Doloris*, February 11, 1984, n. 24: “In so far as man becomes a sharer in Christ’s sufferings—in any part of the world and at any time in history—to that extent *he in his own way completes* the suffering through which Christ accomplished the Redemption of the world.” “Any time in history” includes the life and mission of Saint Joseph – whose share in the sufferings of Christ is situated in the highest order of grace, the order of the hypostatic union. See also Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Dilexit Nos*, October 24, 2024, n. 157.

²⁸ “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church.” The RSV-CE footnote clarifies, “*what is lacking*: Christ’s sufferings were, of course, sufficient for our redemption, but all of us may add ours to his, in order that the fruits of his redemption be applied to the souls of men.” See also Saint John Paul II, *Salvifici Doloris*, sec. 24: “Christ achieved the Redemption completely and to the very limits but at the same time he did not bring it to a close. In this redemptive suffering, through which the Redemption of the world was accomplished, Christ opened himself from the beginning to every human suffering and constantly does so. Yes, it seems to be part of *the very essence of Christ’s redemptive suffering* that this suffering requires to be unceasingly completed.”

in the fullness of time in the great mystery of salvation and is truly a minister of salvation.”

... In a way, we are all like Joseph: a shadow of the heavenly Father ... a shadow that follows his Son.

... The saints help all the faithful “to strive for the holiness and the perfection of their particular state of life”. Their lives are concrete proof that it is possible to put the Gospel into practice. ... The lives of the saints too are examples to be imitated. Saint Paul explicitly says this: “Be imitators of me!” (*1 Cor* 4:16). By his eloquent silence, Saint Joseph says the same.²⁹

Sister Neuzil’s locution presents an ecumenical opportunity that merits further study, not only for the reasons stated by the Protestant theologians cited above, but also because Saint Joseph’s role speaks to *all* followers of Jesus. There is much to unpack. What he lived to an incomparable degree, all Christians are called to live in some way, even to the point of the mystical unity with Christ described in *Col* 1:24.³⁰ Saint Joseph’s unity with Christ -- by way of his holiness, his identity, his role, and his mission – was expressed “through compassion for the *sufferings of Jesus and Mary* [by which he] co-operated, *as no other*, in the salvation of the world.”³¹ As

²⁹ Pope Francis, Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde*, December 8, 2020, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap_20201208_patris-corde.html#_ftnref17.

³⁰ The footnote in the New American Bible concludes, “[Some Scripture scholars] suggest that Paul’s mystical unity with Christ allowed him to call his own sufferings the afflictions of Christ.”

³¹ Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil, *Our Lady of America*, 13. Thus concludes the locution in question.

husband and presumed father united in suffering with the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, this Minister of Salvation's interior martyrdom of love, implicitly revealed in the mystery of the Presentation of Our Lord – in Scripture, in the Liturgy, and in Catholic doctrine³² -- points the way for all Christians to a deeper penetration into the mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption. Saint Joseph is an exemplar of devotion to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus – a devotion which Pope Francis has called “a synthesis of the Gospel” and has exhorted the universal Church to embrace, emphasizing that such devotion is not “something only between Jesus and me.”³³ How can the unfathomable degree of intimacy Saint Joseph enjoyed with Jesus through their unique relationship and the resulting depths of the union of their hearts *not* impact all of humanity?

Conclusion

The role of authentic private revelation is not “to complete Christ's definitive Revelation, but to help live more fully by it

³² For example, as expressed not only in Lk 2:21-36, but also in Lk 2:41-51, Rom 8:29-30, Col 1:12-24, and sections 66, 521, and 618 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Furthermore, “the interior martyrdom of St. Joseph has been ... presented implicitly in the liturgy of the Church in its celebration of the mystery of the Presentation in the Temple” (Fr. Stanley Smolenski, SPMA, “St. Joseph's Greatness in Heaven,” *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, September 7, 2020, <https://www.hprweb.com/2020/09/st-joseph-greatness-in-heaven/>). See also Fr. Frederick L. Miller, *Saint Joseph: Our Father in Faith* (New Haven, CT: Catholic Information Service/Knights of Columbus Supreme Council, 2008), 21-25, <https://www.kofc.org/en/resources/cis/cis328.pdf>.

³³ Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Dilexit Nos*, October 24, 2024, n. 83, 212 (for further context of the locution in question, see also n. 122, 132, 138, 156-157, 163, 191-194, 206) https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/20241024-enciclica-dilexit-nos.html#_ftnref221

in a certain period of history.”³⁴ The relevance of Sister Neuzil’s prophetic message has only deepened and intensified over the decades, offering a way to live the Gospel robustly in the face of today’s unprecedented challenges – as individuals, as families, as Church -- guiding America and all nations into the way of peace. With the proposed application of more focused and precise categories for discerning Sister Neuzil’s inner visions, and the proposed retraction of the finding of doctrinal error, the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith’s new classification of “*nihil obstat*”³⁵ could ultimately be reached. To that end, until the theological difficulty presented by the locution in question is resolved, the new classification of “*prae oculis habeatur*”³⁶ is certainly fitting. In light of these considerations, a re-evaluation of the alleged apparitions of Our Lady of America is not only appropriate and timely, but also right and just.

³⁴ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, sec. 67.

³⁵ Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Norms,” sec. I.B.17: “Without expressing any certainty about the supernatural authenticity of the phenomenon itself, many signs of the action of the Holy Spirit are acknowledged ‘in the midst’ of a given spiritual experience, and no aspects that are particularly critical or risky have been detected, at least so far. For this reason, the Diocesan Bishop is encouraged to appreciate the pastoral value of this spiritual proposal, and even to promote its spread, including possibly through pilgrimages to a sacred site.”

³⁶ Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Norms,” sec. I.B.18: “Although important positive signs are recognized, some aspects of confusion or potential risks are also perceived that require the Diocesan Bishop to engage in a careful discernment and dialogue with the recipients of a given spiritual experience. If there were writings or messages, doctrinal clarification might be necessary.”