

Here, where heaven and earth meet. pp. 2 and 3.
The new pilgrims' way



Lourdes News

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THE DIARY OF GRACES



Editorial The gift of prayer

BY FATHER ANDRÉ CABES,
RECTOR OF THE SANCTUARY

October is the month of the Rosary when we encounter Mary the Mother: she leads us to prayer, as she led Bernadette. Through the invisible channels of grace, she unites us to the whole world. In Lourdes this subtle flow of graces comes to the surface. Hearts whisper softly: Thank you! Sorry! Please! Mary unites us in the heart of God which overflows with mercy. He bestows His mercy on us, and the world flourishes once more. There is no harm, no pain, that can prove a barrier to life: love is stronger than death. The heart of God whispers to us: I love you! He wants to be able to say this to everyone through us.



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See you on 8th December

The climax of the Rosary pilgrimage, organised by the Dominicans, closes the high season of pilgrimages, and marks the start of the winter period when the Sanctuary welcomes those in search of renewed energy. A year characterised by the extraordinary faith of the hundreds of thousands of pilgrims who have followed one after another through the Grotto, in a never-ending stream of Marian prayers and praise. A gathering from all nations comes to listen to Mary speak to them, as she spoke to the servants at the Wedding in Cana, "Do whatever He tells you." After responding to this theme during 2018, all those



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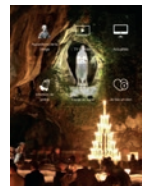
On 8th December, white roses, donated by Internet users from around the world, were placed in the Grotto. A beautiful demonstration of devotion to the Virgin Mary which will be repeated again this year. See the entire programme for 8th December on: www.lourdes-france.org

who work for Lourdes and its message - pilgrimage directors, hospitality presidents, volunteers ... - are already hard at work preparing for 2019, a year that will invite us to reflect on the value of poverty. A forgotten virtue, but so necessary for us

to get back to basics in our lives. We'll see you on 8th December, in the depths of the Lourdes winter, to thank and celebrate the Immaculate Conception who has gathered us together through the course of this year.

Joël Luzenko

If you're in Lourdes:
download the free app



HERE, WHERE HEAVEN AND EARTH MEET

The new pilgrims' way



You are invited to drink the water, wash your face or bathe. Like Bernadette, immerse yourself in the grace of a new birth.



3 Make a gesture with the water

"Go and drink at the spring", is Mary's invitation to Bernadette on 25th February 1858 (9th apparition). Bernadette scrapes in the earth and brings to light the spring from which we can drink at the taps today. It is ordinary water, like that of neighbouring springs. Although many healings are associated with it, it is neither consecrated nor miraculous. It is God who heals through the intercession of the Virgin Mary and the prayer of Christians. Bernadette said herself, "This water would have no virtue without faith."

4 Leave a candle



5 Light a candle

Nobody leaves Lourdes without lighting a candle: "This light extends my prayer". By taking a candle, you are making an offering to the Sanctuary.

2 Reflect in silence

You are not coming into a museum. You can feel at home here. Bernadette said, "**The Grotto was my heaven.**" In front of this rock so inviting that it has received billions of caresses, you are beckoned to look at Mary, who will illuminate your life and will help you to overcome difficulties in your daily life or to recover confidence lost due to adversity.

1 Go to the Grotto

You are here because someone is expecting you. Look up at Mary. As the apparition taught Bernadette, make a meaningful sign of the cross: In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In your heart, think of those who are suffering or who need support. Entrust them to the maternal protection of Our Lady of Lourdes.



Taps provided for filling bottles are accessible near the first bridge.



How I became a Lourdes hospitalier

Pierre is 60 years old. He was baptised but never went to catechism classes. When his wife became ill, he decided to go to Lourdes as a "tourist".

I used to pray, but my prayers went unanswered. In my childish mind I said to myself: Like all men, Christ is not kind. So, I prayed to Mary because mums love their children.

I got married and I had 3 children. My wife became ill. I knew vaguely about Lourdes. I decided to go with my family (actually as a tourist with a camcorder and a camera). At the Grotto we followed the pilgrims as they filed

around the rock. My son and my wife were walking in front of me. In the middle of the grotto, something very strong and sudden happened. An intense emotion invaded my body and my mind, and tears flowed from my eyes without me being able to stop them. I did not understand why. As we came out of the Grotto, everything stopped as suddenly as it had started. I pretended to be filming so that people could not see my eyes. Even today, I do not know what happened. I even wonder if I was not perhaps confused or tired. We went home that same evening. Over time something deep inside me started growing: a force that was pushing me to do something but what? So, I started looking: Catholic



relief, Resto du Cœur, Secours Populaire? I didn't feel that was it. One afternoon, thinking back to Lourdes, I looked for a site. I saw that people could serve in the sanctuary. I knew that I had found what I was looking for. I became a hospitalier. I made my first communion at Saint-John's Cathedral in Perpignan. Leukaemia was found in my 7-year-old granddaughter. In a split second, your life can change. I had often asked the Lord not to test my faith because I

did not know how I would react. Helpless, our only way to fight is to pray, and to pray again. One afternoon, in my daughter's room, I recited a prayer. In the middle of it, you are asked to make the sign of the cross. My little girl was sitting on her bed, she could not see me. As I crossed myself, she looked at the ceiling and said three times, "Jesus." She immediately started playing as if nothing had happened. I finished my prayer but did not dare to ask her what she had seen. Today, she is better. She is continuing her chemo. I am not able to say or understand what happened, but I want to believe that the Most High has given us a grace.

Pierre (France)

A voice awakens Sali: "Get up! Go to Lourdes!"

Born in the Ivory Coast, to a Muslim family, Sali never prayed. She could not read or write. Absolutely nothing prepared her for an encounter with Our Lady of Lourdes. She arrived in the Paris region of France in 1977. Barely educated, her four children converted to Catholicism. It was a fall on her way to work that would change her life.



© SINDU/VIRO

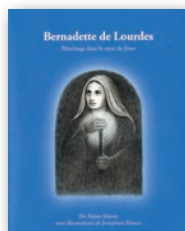
For three months, I could not go back to work because I fell while I was out. One morning, at 4 am, I was awakened by two taps on my thigh and a voice that said to me, "Get up! Go to Lourdes!" I did not know anything about Lourdes. While he was having a clear-out, my director had suggested I choose a book. I do not know how to read. I chose one

because of its cover. I asked my daughter ... it was the story of Bernadette Soubirous! There I was faced with this mysterious invitation. One of my friends goes regularly to Lourdes. I asked him to accompany me. Providence gave us money for travel and accommodation. On the train to Lourdes, I felt a reassuring presence enveloping me. In front

of the Grotto, I asked my friend, "What am I doing? I do not know how to pray." She was annoyed. "Look, you woke me up at 6am to come to Lourdes. Now that you're here, you can at least find something to say to Mary. Speak in your dialect. Speak to her as you would to a person!" Words came to me, "I do not know who brought me here. I put myself in your hands." Then we went to the Baths. I was trembling. The hospitaliers prayed for me. As soon as I entered the water, I felt released from my burdens. When I returned to the Paris region, I started work again. I returned to Lourdes in the following years to give thanks. I have lived there since my retirement. I was baptised surrounded by my whole family. I am involved in the Mouvement Sacerdotal Marial. I learned to read with ... The Diary of Graces. Thank you, Lourdes!

Sali (France)

At the Grotto Bookshop



Bernadette of Lourdes

Adam Simon tells the story of the apparitions. He takes readers on a pilgrimage with Bernadette and helps bring them to the heart of Jesus.

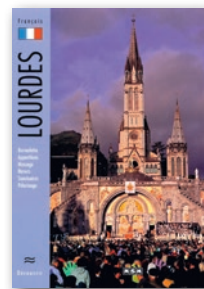
ABCEJ publishing. 2018.
107 p. 19.60 €



Bernadette

René Laurentin has written an honest and straightforward account of Bernadette's life, much like Bernadette herself. A true description of the path to holiness.

Artège poche. 9.90 €



Lourdes

A reference guide to help you discover the Marian city.

MSM
€ 5.60



"God wants us to call him Father"

"Dare to say 'papa', to truly believe that God is the Father who supports me, forgives me, gives me bread, listens to all that I ask, clothes me even more beautifully than the flowers of the fields. Believing is also a big risk: what if it is not true? Dare, dare, but do it together. That's why praying together is so beautiful: because we help each other to dare. " **Pope Francis**



Bearing witness...

I went to Lourdes for the first time this year, I stayed almost a week, but I had to leave the weekend before 15th August. I was mystified by Lourdes, too many people, too many shops. Nothing happened as planned. As soon as I entered the sanctuary I felt welcomed, calmed: compassion is everywhere. I could not contain my emotion in front of the Grotto: Mary is there, majestic, queen, but above all she is our mother full of compassion and tenderness for us. I joined the torchlight procession and I was overwhelmed with emotion, Mary came to let me express all the pain that I have borne since the death of my dear father and to take it away from me: as a mother consoles her child. What a moment of pure happiness ... I attended several Masses in the Rosary Basilica and each time I smelled: vanilla, flowers, sweet spices, indefinable fragrances. This place is holy, the Grotto is like a magnet that attracts us to it constantly; in Lourdes we enter another dimension, we have a taste of paradise, we leave full of peace and hope ... I had a hard time leaving, and I pray that I'll come back as soon as possible. Thank you, Mary, sweet mother, for your infinite kindness.

Lucinda (Portugal) ✉

Through this email, I wish to express my immeasurable and eternal gratitude to Our Lady of Lourdes, for the grace of the birth of a beautiful little girl who was given to me through her intercession. I also thank you on behalf of my entire family. **Cettina (Italy)** ✉

I have been fond of Lourdes since my childhood, coming with my parents once a year. Today, I continue this pilgrimage with my husband and I feel the benefits of it. **Martine (France)** ✉

I give thanks to God because, in spite of my shortcomings, I feel that I am being heard. **Oscar (Spain)** ✉

Bernadette said...

"When you pass by the chapel and haven't time to stop, tell your Guardian Angel to take your messages to Our Lord in the Tabernacle. He will take them and then have time to catch up with you."

(Logia de Bernadette, volume I, N 232)



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Videos by Laurent Jarneau for www.lourdes-france.org

Jean-Noël That day, when he felt he was the most miserable of men, Jean-Noël stopped in front of the Grotto of Apparitions in Lourdes. Suddenly, he first sensed "a gust of wind" even though no tree branch moved, followed by an invisible "soft feminine presence". Immediately a grace of peace came upon him. He was completely blown away by it. His life would never be the same again.

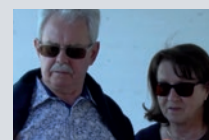


Joanne In Lourdes for the first time and feeling intimidated, Joanne from Trinidad and Tobago, found the water at the Sanctuary Baths very cold, then very quickly was captivated by the expression of the Virgin on the statuette placed in front of her.



Simone et Guy

came to Lourdes to say thank you for their 50 years of marriage. They came to remember the time they came to the Grotto after their wedding. It was in 1968. For them, Lourdes was a beautiful story of love. They established their love ... but also the magnificent pilgrimage of the gardians, the *Nacioun Gardiano*.



Watch the videos and other testimonials on our youtube channel: [LourdesWebTV](https://www.youtube.com/LourdesWebTV)

Your reactions

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