

# Lourdes News

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THE JOURNAL OF GRACES



## Editorial Heart to Heart with Jesus, another Jesus

BY FATHER ANDRÉ CABES,  
RECTOR OF SANCTUARY

This was how Bernadette described what she experienced during her first communion on 3rd June 1858. She was prepared by Mary, who knew how to cultivate her capacity for love and prayer. Lourdes is nothing other than communion of souls, drawn to the source of the Gospel. Eucharistic miracles, like the healing of Sister Bernadette\*, occur in the grace of each person's encounter with their brothers and sisters, and with their God. This is the miracle of a new humanity that our world so badly needs. The Body of Christ, the bodies of the sick, as we discover with emotion in the new film Lourdes: even through suffering and death, receive the miracle of Life. ■

\*Editor's note: Sister Bernadette Moriau, 70<sup>th</sup> miraculous healing in Lourdes recognised on 11th February 2018.



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## "Seek peace and pursue it" Ps 34, 15 17-19<sup>th</sup> May, 61<sup>st</sup> International Military Pilgrimage

Since 1958, the date of the first International Military Pilgrimage in Lourdes, the military have been loyally attending this great and unique international event in the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes.

As Pope Francis writes in his message for the 52<sup>nd</sup> World Day of Peace: "Offering peace is at the heart of the mission of the disciples of Christ." This theme again illustrates the triptych: fraternity, peace, hope.

### Peace, a gift from God

In the scriptures, peace is the gift of God to men. Even today, this beautiful gift is in our hands. There is no perfect peace, but we all have the freedom to advance it.

### Inner Peace

The question of forgiveness requested, implored, received from others and from God in the context of the sacrament of reconciliation is central. Peace is the fruit of justice and charity.



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### Peace for others and with creation

Peace at all levels requires the restoration of dialogue. For Pope Francis, peace is not gentle but energetic. It is embodied in our abrupt physical world where desperation and despair conti-

nue to grow. Let us be witnesses of hope and disseminators of peace in our daily lives. We wish you a wonderful and holy pilgrimage.

**Arnault Berrone, chaplain  
and director of the IMP**



# THE EUCHARIST AT THE HEART OF THE SANCTUARY

Pages coordinated by Joel Luzenko

At the beginning of 1858, before the Apparitions, Bernadette lived in Bartrès. Driven by the desire to make her first communion, she decided to return to Lourdes. And a few days later, she would be honoured to experience the first of 18 Apparitions. And finally, on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1858, Bernadette would make her First Holy Communion. Reading about these events reiterates the central place of the Eucharist [1] in the pilgrimage.

## Bernadette and the Eucharist

If little Bernadette Soubirous was not, according to historians, "a particularly pious child", she was deeply marked by her desire to receive Jesus. While living with her former nanny in the village of Bartrès, she said, "I want to come back to Lourdes to go to class and

prepare for my First Holy Communion." On 17<sup>th</sup> January 1858, a few days before the first Apparition, she left Bartrès, alone and on foot, explaining, "The priest wants me to make my first communion and if I return to Lourdes, I will be able to do it." Some commentators

on the Message of Lourdes explain that the Virgin Mary was in a way Bernadette's catechist in preparing her for her first communion. This is illustrated by the mosaic in the choir of the Rosary Basilica with the words, "Through Mary, to Jesus." The day after her first com-

munion, on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1858, she was asked, "What were you most happy about: your first communion or the Apparitions?" Bernadette responded with her usual simplicity, "These two things go together but cannot be compared ... I was very happy about both."

## Pilgrims and the Eucharist

The sacrament [2] of the Eucharist is at the centre of the pilgrimage process in Lourdes. Eucharistic worship comes especially to the fore at two particular moments: the international masses and the daily Eucharistic procession.

### > International Mass

is celebrated every Wednesday and Sunday morning in the underground Basilica of St. Pius X. For all pilgrimages present, it offers a collective Eucharistic celebration, as a sym-



bol of the universal Church gathered in Lourdes. It is called «international» because songs and readings are proclaimed in several languages.

### > Eucharistic procession

every day, at 5 pm, the organ and trumpet resound

through the loudspeakers in the Sanctuary. This marks the start of the Eucharistic procession, from the prairie in front of the Grotto. Sick pilgrims, the hospitality and visitors are invited to walk to the Basilica of St. Pius X; the priest holding the monstrance [3] completes the procession. There follows, in the huge underground basilica, a time of silence and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament [4], followed by the blessing of the sick.

At the blessing of the sick with the Blessed Sacrament, the doctors present that day follow the priest around the basilica. Why? This is a tradition that has been maintained in Lourdes for over a hundred years. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many healings took place during the blessing of the sick. To avoid deceit, doctors were invited to observe and verify the authenticity of these cures.

## Prayer of Saint Bernadette

*"Grow, Jesus, grow in me, in my heart, in my mind, my imagination, my senses, by your modesty, your purity, your humility, your zeal, your love. Grow with your grace, your light, your peace.*

*Grow despite my resistance, my pride; grow to the fullness of the perfect man, grow as in Nazareth before God and men, for the glory of your Father. Amen."*

## UNDERSTANDING THE MASS



### WELCOMING

- Welcome
- Forgiveness
- Glory to God



### LITURGY OF THE WORD

- 1<sup>st</sup> reading (often a passage from the Old Testament)
- Psalm
- 2<sup>nd</sup> reading (often a letter or an extract from the acts of the apostles)
- Gospel (often followed by a homily)



## 4 CATECHESSES

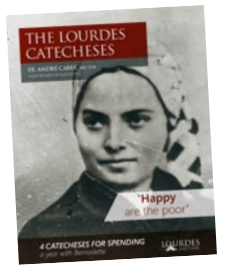
### TO FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF BERNADETTE

The collection of catecheses launched by Father André Cabes, Rector, in 2017, is enriched this year with 4 new documents, to help us experience the message of Lourdes in 2019, the Bernadette Year.

In 2019, the Sanctuary of Lourdes is encouraging pilgrims to follow in the footsteps of Bernadette. We are, indeed, in a jubilee year. Bernadette was born on 7<sup>th</sup> January 1844, and was baptised on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 175 years ago. She passed into the light of Heaven on 16th April 1879, just 140 years ago.

Starting with the demonstration of a beautiful sign of the Cross, Bernadette's meeting with the Lady of Massabielle teaches us the secret of the joy of believing. In this way, we experience life in the Church. Bernadette had to ask the priests to build a chapel, and to start processions. A new humanity, a people made up of the little ones and the poor, heads for the family home that is the Sanctuary of Lourdes. Yes, happy are the poor, you delight in the happiness of Jesus, you live in the happiness of God!

This is the path that we are suggesting in these catecheses, our journey with Bernadette, the way of the Gospel and of true life.



## Priests in the service of the Eucharist

The community of chaplains of Lourdes is composed of about thirty priests. Their mission of welcoming pilgrims is reflected particularly in the celebration of the sacraments of the Eucharist and penance (confession). One of them, Don Anne-Guillaume Vernaecht, explains why it is so important to

experience the Eucharist during your pilgrimage: *"The Virgin Mary addressed Bernadette asking her to go to the spring to drink and to wash there. Even though the spring is real, and it still flows today, Mary uses a symbolic language. The reality behind these words and behind the spring is Jesus who*

*gives himself to us. Go to the spring means: go to Jesus. Drink at the spring: receive the gift of God. Wash yourself at the spring: God forgives all sins. All this is the Eucharist. A pilgrimage in Lourdes involves the gesture of water at the taps, drinking the water and washing your hands and face with water, but these*

*symbolic gestures must lead us to the spiritual reality: the Mass. Jesus is present, he gives himself to us, and we receive him in the Eucharist. If we are in communion with him, it is because our sins are forgiven. That's why it's good to have gone to confession before attending the mass."*

## A short glossary of the Eucharist

**[1]** Eucharist means "thanksgiving" in Greek. Among Christians, and more specifically among Catholics, the Eucharist is the celebration of the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ who is truly present in the form of bread and wine.

**[2]** Sacraments: concerning the sacraments, the Church speaks of "signs" which are gestures by which Jesus acts in our souls by giving them his grace in a special way. There are seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation (confession), Anointing of the Sick, Ordination and Marriage.

**[3]** Monstrance: the monstrance is a liturgical item in which we place a consecrated host that can be seen through a small window.

**[4]** Blessed Sacrament: This is an expression that evokes the Eucharist as the sacrament par excellence, because it contains the very author of grace, through his «real presence» in the host consecrated during the mass.

### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARISTIC

- Preparation of the gifts (bread and wine)
- Consecration
- Our Father
- Communion

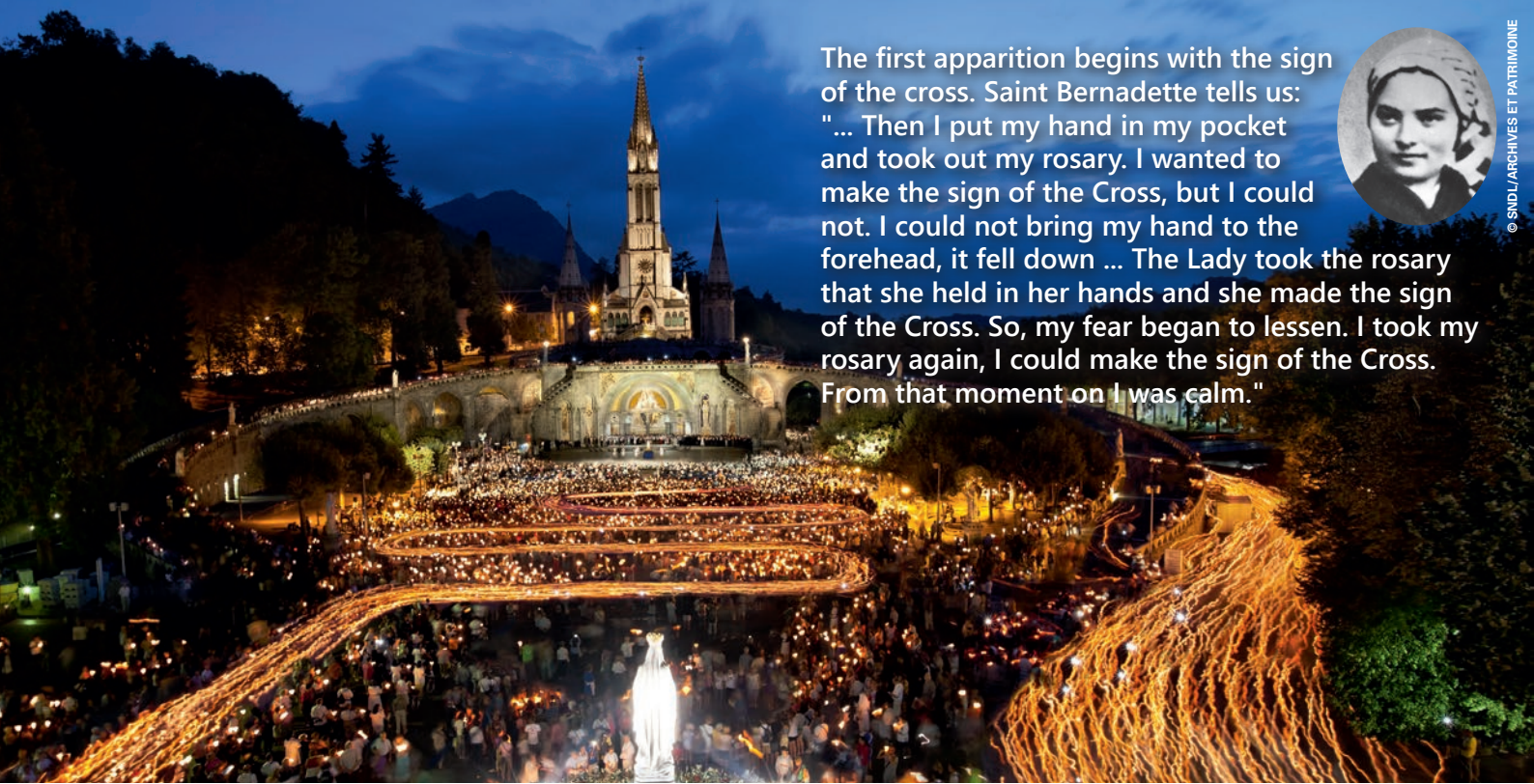
### DISMISSAL

- Thanksgiving
- Final blessing



# THE DIARY OF GRACES

Pages coordinated by Martine Korpál



The first apparition begins with the sign of the cross. Saint Bernadette tells us: "... Then I put my hand in my pocket and took out my rosary. I wanted to make the sign of the Cross, but I could not. I could not bring my hand to the forehead, it fell down ... The Lady took the rosary that she held in her hands and she made the sign of the Cross. So, my fear began to lessen. I took my rosary again, I could make the sign of the Cross. From that moment on I was calm."

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## All my prayers answered

Married for forty-four years, mother of three children and grandmother to 2 grandchildren, Marie-Claude dreamed of a pilgrimage to Lourdes, with her husband, just the two of them and their faith. This dream came true on 3<sup>rd</sup> October during the Rosary pilgrimage to Lourdes.

"I was born and raised in a loving home of great faith. My parents participated in the pilgrimage of the Rosary to Lourdes, each year, for as long as their health allowed. They died in the peace that God alone gives. I prayed to Mary every night that I cared for them. All the prayers I make have been answered. I am always focused on the Virgin, I understand that



all that I receive, all that I know, is for giving to and sharing with those around me. Today, thanks to the Sanctuary's free app (the (download from Google play or the App store), I can be connected to Lourdes every day. I do not miss a rosary, 3:30pm (French) at the Grotto, (2:30pm on Monday and Wednesday in English). We came on pilgrimage for the first time with our three children thirty-two years ago. Married for forty-four years, we were waiting to experience Lourdes, my husband and I, just the two of us and our

faith. And all my prayers have come true, especially that of meeting the priests that I see from my home via the app. At the Baths, when it was time for me to go in, all my fears disappeared. I am hard of hearing. I removed my hearing aids before going into the water. Despite the isolation of my deafness, I was able to pray and entrust all my intentions to Our Lady of Lourdes, and one in particular: that I should hear my children and my grandchildren as long as God will lend me life. It was there that I received an im-

mense grace: I cried, without stopping. These tears carried away my long-buried suffering. Another grace was granted to me, during the Espelugues (upper) Stations of the Cross. In front of the XIII station, my husband and I, at exactly the same moment, felt the joy of the Resurrection. In our family, we have lost children before birth. I did the Way of Consolation where I felt the love of our mother of Heaven. We met a priest there whom we asked to say a mass for us. As I wrote at the beginning of my story, all my prayers have been answered. To end this wonderful day, we decided to attend a Mass at the Rosary Basilica. Guess who was celebrating it? ... We came back from Lourdes filled with an overwhelming sense of faith. Thank you, Mary!" ■

Marie-Claude (France)

## "Take us by the hand, Mary"

On the 1<sup>st</sup> January, on the feast of Mary, Mother of God, Pope Francis spoke the following: "God appears as a little child, held in the arms of a woman who feeds her Creator. (...) She is a mother who generates in her children the amazement of faith, because faith is an encounter, not a religion. (...) It is beautiful, especially, to be gazed upon by the Virgin. When she gazes upon us, she does not see sinners but children. Let us allow ourselves to be embraced. (...) Our Lady took everything to heart; she embraced everything, events both good and bad. (...) And in the journey of life, let us allow ourselves to be taken by the hand. Mothers take their children by the hand and lovingly introduce them to life. Mary, take us by the hand. Clinging to you, we will pass safely through the straits of history. Lead us by the hand to rediscover the bonds that unite us. ■



Pope Francis, 1st January 2019, Rome

## Our Lady of Pellevoisin and Our Lady of Lourdes must have talked to each other...

In 2017, my wife and I drove to Châteauroux to pick up the A20 motorway and head to Lourdes. To our greatest astonishment, signs directed us to Pellevoisin. So, we stopped at the village church and then at the place of the apparitions where we asked for the grace of protection for our children, their families and our grandchildren. We set off again, happy to have discovered Pellevoisin and its message. The A20 motorway affords beautiful, contoured landscapes. At Saint-Céré, just after going through a pass, I was about to increase my speed to 130 km / hour when a car appeared behind me going at 200 km / hour. My reflexes pulled the steering wheel to the right, but my car made several "S" turns and, after a few seconds, I regained control of the vehicle. My wife was shocked, but quickly took charge and helped me not lose my cool, as I already have several points on my licence. Could I tell you the make and colour of the car? No, he was going way too fast. But I am certain that Our Lady of Pellevoisin and Our Lady of Lourdes talked to each other and protected us from certain death. God be praised and his mother too. Our Lady of Pellevoisin and Our Lady of Lourdes, thank you for continuing to be with us. ■

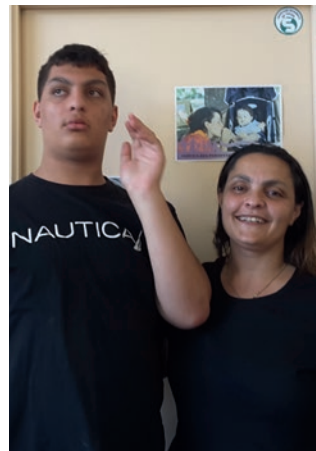
Olivier and Martine (France)

## What God wants

Elisabeth wished to testify to the graces she received through the intercession of Saint Bernadette and Our Lady of Lourdes.

"After ten years of marriage, I still had no children. I called on St. Bernadette. In my prayer, I did not ask for anything. I just said, if I have a child, I will be happy. If I do not have one, I'll be just as content through the grace of God. I prayed every day, at home, and in the churches of Saint Bernadette and Our Lady of Lourdes, near my home in Sydney (Australia). And Bernadette was born. Today she is 18 years old, very sweet, very caring. Then, two years later, Nassar was born. A beautiful boy weighing 3 kg, in perfect health ... for 4 days. When suddenly on Good Friday, he had a heart attack. He was revived but remained in a coma. The doctors wanted to unplug the ma-

chines that were keeping him alive. I refused. Despite the risk that he would be blind, deaf, dumb, as the medical team told me. I prayed to Saint Bernadette, Our Lady of Lourdes and Saint Charbel (I am of Lebanese origin). He came out of the coma on Easter Monday! Blind, deaf, dumb and completely floppy. He could not open his mouth and could not sit up. It took several operations for him to be able to eat. He stayed in the hospital for nine months. With my husband, my sister and my mother, we prayed a great deal, always invoking Our Lady of Lourdes, Bernadette Soubirous, and Saint Charbel. God made lies of all the worst scientific predictions. Today, Nassar is a



tall 16-year-old. He can see, he can hear, he can speak. He has autism. But what is normal? After Nassar, my third child was born, a girl, filling us with joy. Every day, I give thanks. I come to Lourdes as regularly as I can. This is my best gift. I find so much peace!" ■

Elisabeth (Sydney, Australia)

As a member of the hospitality, I give a smile, a hello, just a small sign for these 100 patients that I help in April, every year, in Lourdes. ■ G. Lafosse (France)



## Sortie au cinéma du film "LOURDES"

Nous encourageons ceux qui le peuvent à se rendre au cinéma, à partir du 8 mai 2019, à l'occasion de la sortie du film *LOURDES*, réalisé par Thierry Demaizière et Alban Teurlai. Ce documentaire donne la parole à des pèlerins, à des malades, ou à des hospitaliers qui ont tous un point commun : ils aiment Lourdes ! Un film fort et vrai.



## "Two drops of water released me"

I came to the Sanctuary to entrust my burden to Our Lady of Lourdes, because life was becoming more and more difficult. On the first day, I went to confession. In the afternoon, for the first time in my life, I attended the rosary. After the prayer, I queued along the Grotto to greet Our Blessed Mother, the Virgin Mary. Then surprise, as soon as I finished the sign of the Cross, while I was beneath the Marian statue, two drops of water fell on my right

arm. From that moment, my head, heavy with serious worries, became very light, and some tears came to my eyes. An immense joy invaded my whole being. I felt liberated, happy and soothed. I then said, "Thank you, Mother." I don't know what more I can say, except that since that day I have increased my daily prayers by giving a lot of time to Our Heavenly Mother, who has taken care of my sorrows and my fears. As soon as an opportunity is given

to me, I long to return to the Sanctuary to speak to Our Lady of Lourdes, my Mother. Even a persistent neck pain has disappeared. I confidently took up my volunteer work: giving Dutch language classes to refugees, helping their children with homework. The best thing for me is regularly attending the rehearsals of our Gregorian chant choir which makes the Sunday celebrations so beautiful. In union with Christ and Our Mother of Lourdes. ■

Leonard (Belgium)

## Returning from Lourdes, I asked to be baptised

As a student in military college, despite being an atheist, I joined the International Military Pilgrimage (IMP) to Lourdes. I had put my name down to go to the Baths, but I went apprehensively. Not knowing how to pray, I repeated "Hail Mary!" in my head when I went into the water. I then felt a strong emotion and a hitherto unknown joy. Back in college, I went to the



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chaplaincy where I discovered a cheerful, caring community that welcomed me for who I was. After a little exploration, I asked to be baptised and

the chaplain prepared me to receive the sacrament at the next IMP. And so, during the 60<sup>th</sup> IMP, in 2018, I received this sacrament. It was a very intense moment. Despite the crowd of pilgrims, I really felt a strong presence of Jesus in my heart. From then on, I have come alive again, I finally found that love that I had been missing. ■

Chloé (France)



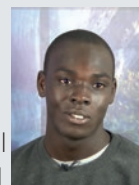
Laurent Jarneau's videos  
for the Sanctuary website  
[www.lourdes-france.org](http://www.lourdes-france.org)



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**The 7 successive presidents** of the Hospitality of Anjou (Angers, Maine-et-Loire, France) took time out for a photo in the Sanctuary of Lourdes, on the occasion of their diocesan pilgrimage. They are called Annie, Roger, Claude, Marie-Claude, Colette, Bernard, Nicolas. They give thanks for all that they experience through contact with the sick pilgrims they accompany.

**Earvin** was a young man going through a tough time in his life. After hitchhiking all the way, he arrived in Lourdes with



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the hope of changing things. On his way, he met the Cenacolo community ... Like Bernadette Soubirous, who scraped the mud from the bottom of the Grotto to bring out pure water, Earvin then discovered the Source that is Jesus Christ, the God of Love. An incalculable grace through which, by baptism, he was "reborn from above".



See the videos  
and other  
testimonials on  
our youtube  
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