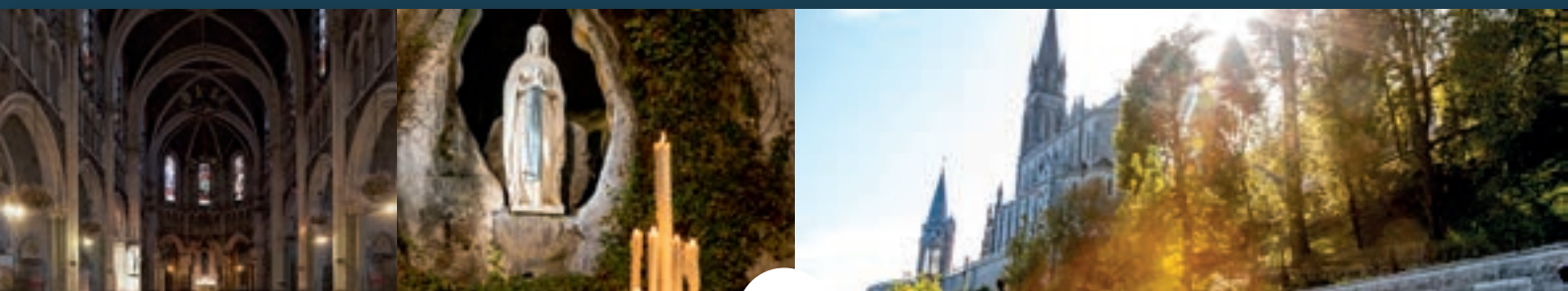


## Vision Lourdes 2030



# The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes *Basilica of the Immaculate Conception* *(Upper Basilica)*



A Basilica for the 21st Century





The Upper Basilica bell tower and spire, during and after restoration work, 2021.



# The time has come to remodel Lourdes for the years to come.

Penance, Prayer. Healing.

The message from Lourdes is just as relevant today as it was when Our Lady spoke to Bernadette over 160 years ago.

Since the beginning of the global pandemic, millions of people have found confidence and comfort in the unique spirituality of Lourdes “online”. There is no other place like our Sanctuary, and I hope that Lourdes will always be a refuge for those who are seeking peace and healing, a unique place where people can experience fraternity and the joy that comes with faith.

**Looking to the future, the world needs Our Lady’s comforting embrace more than ever.** And the Sanctuary must adapt to meet the expectations of all pilgrims. May Our Lady protect you and your loved ones, fill you with her graces and reward your generosity to Lourdes.



Father Michel Daubanes  
Rector of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes



The Bishop of Tarbes and Lourdes, the Rector and the Chaplains of the Sanctuary in 2023.

# Lourdes, a brief history

**The story of Lourdes is well known throughout the world. Not only has it been immortalised in print, on stage and on the silver screen, but for millions of believers around the world it has become part of daily prayer through the Rosary.**

It is the story of a poor local girl in France in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the name of Bernadette Soubirous who could neither read nor write due to bouts of frequent illness as a child, yet who would be chosen by God to receive apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

On 11<sup>th</sup> February 1858, Bernadette was out gathering firewood with her sister Toinette and a friend near the grotto of Massabielle, just outside the town of Lourdes in the French Pyrenees, when she experienced the first vision of “a smiling figure of a lady dressed in white and enveloped in a soft light”.

On her third visit, the vision in white asked Bernadette to return to the Grotto every day for a fortnight in what would become known as ‘la Quinzaine sacree’ or ‘holy fortnight.’

Between the 11<sup>th</sup> February and 16<sup>th</sup> July, Our Lady would appear to

Bernadette no less than 18 times, during which the Blessed Mother imparted four messages, or revelations, to Bernadette:

- Do penance and pray to God for sinners
- Go and drink at the spring, and wash yourself in it
- Tell the priests to build a chapel here, and that people are to come here in procession
- The proclamation ‘I am the Immaculate Conception’







Following extensive investigations, Church authorities finally confirmed the authenticity of the apparitions in 1862.

In the 165 years since Our Lady pointed Bernadette towards the (as yet undiscovered) spring in the ground which would become a place of pilgrimage for the next two centuries, 70 official cures have been verified by the Lourdes Medical

“  
*The Lady said,  
in the local dialect  
Gascon Occitan,  
“I am the Immaculate  
Conception”.*



**Pilgrims light candles for personal prayer intentions, especially for those unable to physically travel to Lourdes.**

Bureau as ‘inexplicable’, where no other explanation was found following rigorous medical and scientific examinations.

The Lourdes Commission that examined Bernadette after the vision also ran an extensive analysis of the water from the spring and found that, while it had a high mineral content, it contained nothing out of the ordinary that would account for the cures

attributed to it. Bernadette said that it was faith and prayers that cured the sick: *“One must have faith and pray; the water will have no virtue without faith.”*

Bernadette created a sensation at the time. At first her parents were very embarrassed, asking her not to return to the Grotto. She became engulfed in a media frenzy. Despite many offers, she accepted no payment for her story, saying *“I want to remain poor”*.





She did not bless the many rosaries thrust at her either. *“I don’t wear a stole”*. She did not sell medals. *“I am not a merchant.”*

The local bishop, writing about the Apparitions, commented on Bernadette’s *“simplicity, the candour, the modesty of this child”* always giving *“clear precise responses, impressed with a strong conviction.”*

Bernadette herself said of the Apparitions: *“The Virgin used me as a broom to remove the dust. When the work is done, the broom is put behind the door again.”*

In the wake of the Apparitions, her parish priest decided that she needed to be protected. Bernadette entered the convent of the Sisters of Nevers aged just 16, and made her solemn profession as a postulant on July 29, 1866 taking the name of Sr. Marie-Bernarde.

Later, she wrote to her family *“My mission in Lourdes is finished”*, withdrawing in order to give all space and honor to Mary.

Bernadette Soubirous passed to Eternal Life on April 16, 1879 at the young age of 35.

On December 8, 1933, Pope Pius XI declared Bernadette Soubirous a saint of the Roman Catholic Church. Her feast day is observed in Lourdes on the day of the third apparition during which the Blessed Virgin spoke to her for the first time, and in the rest of the world on the day of her death, April 16.

# Lourdes today

Today the Sanctuary attracts almost 4 million visitors every year from every corner of the world. It is universally recognized as a unique place of peace, of prayer, of contemplation and especially of healing.

Although there have been **70** Lourdes miracles formally recognized by the Church since Our Lady's appearances to Bernadette in 1858, there are actually over **7000** cases which have been officially investigated, and over **100,000** claims of cures over the history of the Sanctuary.

The spring to which Our Lady guided the young Bernadette to discover has always been seen as a sign of grace, and today hundreds of thousands of pilgrims drink the water from the same spring and bath in the water of the famous baths which have traditionally been regarded as a place of healing and cure.

There is also a strong association with the Holy See. St. John Paul II visited on multiple occasions both as cardinal and pope, as did Pope Benedict XVI. In the Vatican Gardens there is an identical grotto to that of Lourdes. Many popes have stopped before it on their daily walk to recite the Rosary.

Our Blessed Mother is also acknowledged by other faiths as a holy person of importance, a fact reflected in the many visitors from other faiths who visit Lourdes every year.







The many national chapels at Lourdes reflect the universality of those who visit Lourdes from every corner of the world, offering the opportunity to experience the grace of a personal encounter with God and His blessed Mother Mary, as well as the reconnection to one's true self.

Lourdes is also a place of welcome, of inclusion for all, regardless of age, gender, status, physical or mental wellbeing. It is a place of penance and compassion, of healing and love, and these components are the 'everyday miracle' of Lourdes for our modern times.

The Sanctuary has **30** permanent chaplains, ministering spiritually to the pilgrims with more than **60** Masses scheduled each day during the season as well as the Sacrament of Reconciliation available every day all through the day. Lourdes also welcomes about **180** priests as auxiliary

confessors and **250** seminarians who are ministering to Day pilgrims.

While thousands of sick and disabled pilgrims visit Lourdes every year, God's healing power extends to those with a devotion to Our Lady who cannot visit Lourdes physically. It allows those who cannot make the journey to be present spiritually with those who make the pilgrimage on their behalf, part of the wider 'Lourdes family'.

Throughout the Covid pandemic, Lourdes became more important than ever as a sign of hope and renewal for our world. Millions of faithful followed online, through television and social media the daily Rosaries and prayers at the Grotto. Despite global travel restrictions over a million pilgrims visited Lourdes in 2021, and numbers are returning to pre-pandemic levels in 2023 which presents new challenges to the Sanctuary.

*Lourdes is a place of penance and compassion, of healing and love, and these components are the 'everyday miracle' of Lourdes for our modern times.*



The original spring which Bernadette found still flows.



Water from the spring is available at taps near the Grotto.



The hospitaliers of the Order of Malta are an important presence at Lourdes.

# Testimonials

“

Since 1883 there has been a resident doctor at the Sanctuary of Lourdes.

Every day I see pilgrims who had been very sick who are possible miracles and I always have to ask myself, ‘Is this an unexplained cure?’ I have to make sure before considering an unexplained cure whether there is no other possible explanation to their recovery from a serious illness, a recovery which no scientist can explain.

Some 7500 claims have been studied over the history of the Office of Medical Observations, but only 70 cures have been found to be “unexplained according to current medical knowledge” by this office and declared a miracle by the person’s bishop. The last Miracle was recognized in 2018. Over 300 doctors studied the case but couldn’t explain the cure.

In the course of one year I will see over 100 possible cures in my office. All examples of great faith. As to whether they are all miracles, well, why not?

”

**Dr Alessandro de Franciscis,  
President of the Office of Medical Observations of Lourdes**



“

Unable to have children, my mother went to pray to the Blessed Virgin Mary in Lourdes. She had expressed the desire to have a little girl. Nine months later, she gave birth to twins: Bernadette and Geneviève. I am one of them.

”

**A pilgrim**

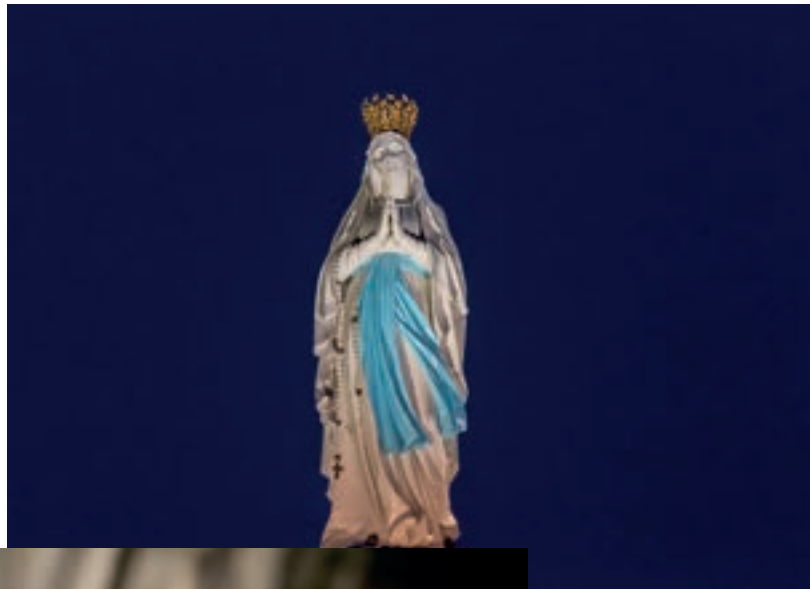


“After many happy years of marriage, my wife became ill. I knew vaguely about Lourdes. I decided to go with my family (actually as a tourist with a camcorder and a camera). At the Grotto we followed the pilgrims as they filed around the rock. My son and my wife were walking in front of me. In the middle 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? I found out that people could serve in the Sanctuary. I knew that I had found what I was looking for. I became a hospitalier.

A year later 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, 60.



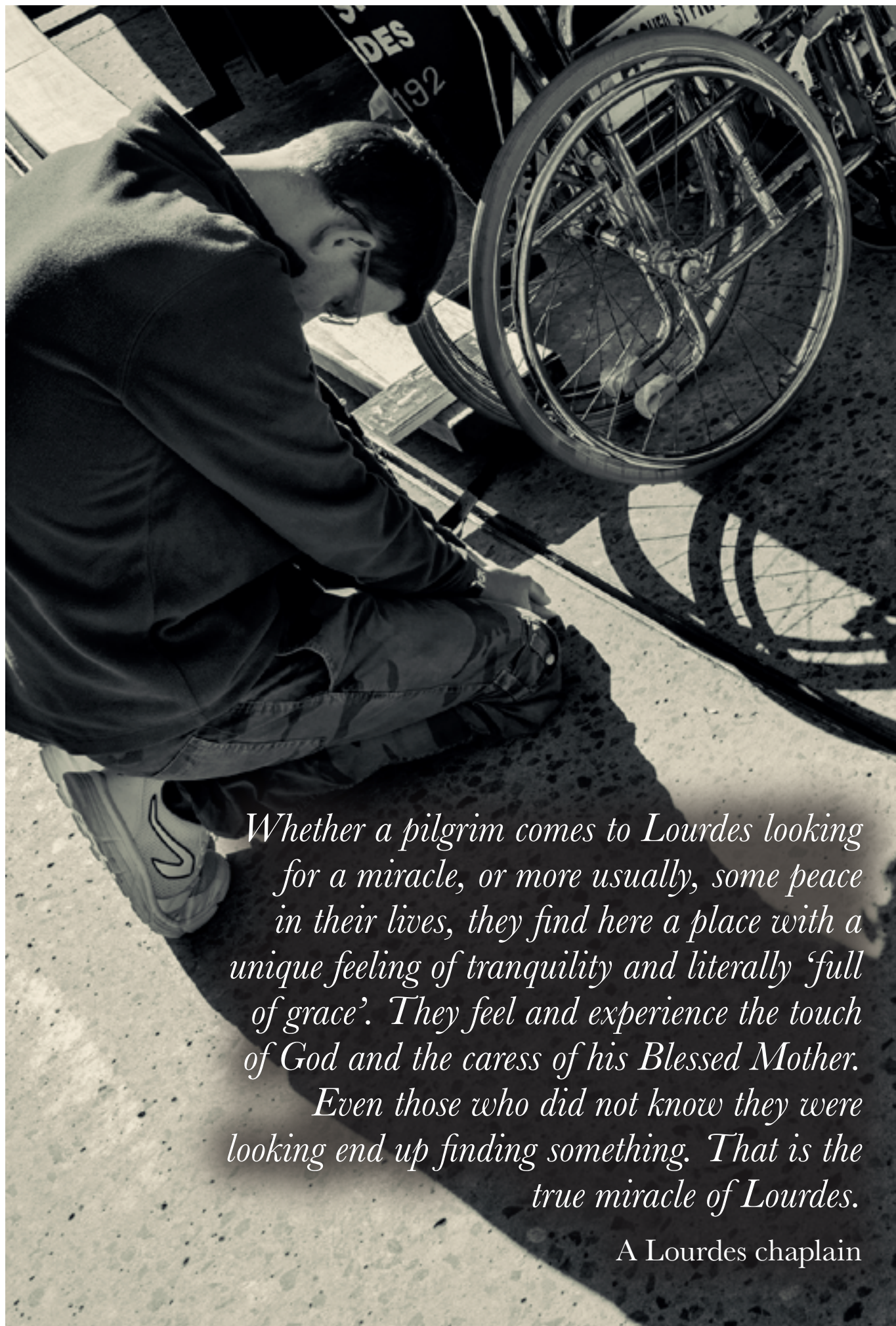
**Morgan Freeman visits Lourdes with Sister Bernadette Moriau, the 70th miracle**

“

I discovered Lourdes in 2017 during a pilgrimage beginning in Rome where, in front of a Pietà, I had felt Mary's pain and, at the same time, a great peace. In Lourdes, at the Baths, I was at first intimidated and I found the water very cold. Then very quickly I was attracted by the gaze of the Virgin on me, that of the statuette placed in front of me. At the same time a gentle heat filled me. This feeling was very fleeting. The next day, despite my tight schedule, I heard a sort of call to go back to the Baths. This time, under the very reassuring eyes of the ladies, I understood that Mary was there. She was waiting for me. As soon as my foot touched the water, it felt hot and a warmth flooded me from head to toe. My heart rate accelerated. And always I felt this inner peace. I heard both in my ears and in my heart a small voice saying, “Come here and help me, help the people who are suffering.” I was still very calm as I embraced the ladies of the hospitalité. As I left, guided by Providence I tried to find out how I could serve at the Sanctuary. One year later, here I am working in Lourdes. During each act at the Sanctuary, I feel that I am home.

”

**Joanne, Trinidad and Tobago**




*Whether a pilgrim comes to Lourdes looking for a miracle, or more usually, some peace in their lives, they find here a place with a unique feeling of tranquility and literally 'full of grace'. They feel and experience the touch of God and the caress of his Blessed Mother.*

*Even those who did not know they were looking end up finding something. That is the true miracle of Lourdes.*

A Lourdes chaplain

# A new chapter of Renewal of the Upper Basilica



Just 18 years after Our Lady appeared to Bernadette Soubirous in 1858, the Basilica at Lourdes was built.

The architect wrote at the time *‘In order to get even closer to this holy place, a crypt or sanctuary will be constructed below this chapel, to be located between the upper sanctuary and the Grotto.’* This ‘chapel’ quickly became known as **the Upper Basilica**.

Since the Upper Basilica was built in 1871 there have been very few structural interventions. Some repairs to its roof took place in 1951 and a further temporary stabilization was made to the roof in 2012.

**As a result, an urgent intervention to the Upper Basilica is required to ensure the safety of the building for future generations. Work to the Bell Tower began in 2021.**

It will be the first comprehensive program of works in more than a century to address serious signs of wear and tear, not just in the Upper Basilica but also in the Bell Tower, its Spire, and the two smaller Parvis towers.

In addition, the Sanctuary will take this opportunity to address other priorities within the Upper Basilica, including works to the Choir and the nave, the

provision of state-of-the-art heating, lighting, sound and airconditioning, and new wheelchair access, all designed to significantly enhance the pilgrim experience.

Perhaps most significantly, changes will be made to the Crypt and the chapel where are housed.

As Mons. Xavier d’Arodes de Peyriague former Vice-Rector, said: ‘The renovation works to the Upper Basilica and the Crypt represent not just a visible sign of hope and renewal for all people of faith, but also a ‘second chapter’ in the history of Lourdes, renewed by the renovations to the original church erected by the faithful on command of Our Blessed Mother.’

The total cost of the entire renovation program is 17.5 million euro which is being raised almost entirely through an international fundraising campaign.



- Reordering of the Basilica Sanctuary and the Nave.
- In a 400m sq area within the Basilica the centre of the nave will be raised and the two side aisles will be lowered to create one level throughout in order to allow better access by the sick and disabled to the entire Basilica.
- Underfloor heating will be installed throughout the Basilica for the first time and a new stone floor will also be installed.
- A new lighting system will be installed in the Upper Basilica and in the Crypt, emphasizing and illuminating the altar, the nave, the statue of the Virgin and the relics of Saint Bernadette.

## ***The Sanctuary and Choir***



- A new altar of white Carrara marble in a style faithful to the original. The altar will have four columns defining three panels in bas-relief of the Crucifixion, the Nativity and the Annunciation;
- A new 'ambo' or lectern in white marble;
- A new tabernacle with an icon of Our Lady;
- A mobile pulpit made of cedar wood;
- A celebrant's seat made from cedar wood with dark mahogany varnish;
- 34 seated benches made from cedar wood;
- A credence table made from cedar wood;
- A new chandelier in a complementary design;
- An 'umbraculum' or umbrella representing the pontifical status of the Basilica;
- Renovation of the statue of the Blessed Virgin.

## ***The Vaulted Ceiling***



The 144 years which separate us from the original consecration of the Basilica have inevitably left their traces.

Whether through the passage of time or the millions of prayers of supplication and thanksgiving which were sent heavenward from within the Upper Basilica, there now remains the challenge of 2200m<sup>2</sup> of ceiling vaults and walls to restore.

From the plastering and painting of the walls to the individual Chapels and votive candle stands, the goal is that the entire interior of the Basilica will regain its original lustre and continue the testimony of faith desired by Our Lady.

## ***Stained Glass Windows***



The Basilica has 42 narrative stained glass windows, telling the story of the apparitions and the evolution of the Sanctuary. These were designed by Canon Lambert from Paris and subsequently rendered in the style of painting by the famous stained glass artist Lucien Laurent-Gsell. In total they cover an area of 380m<sup>2</sup> throughout the Upper Basilica and the Crypt.

## ***The Organ***



The magnificent organ in the Upper Basilica has not been renovated for 50 years hence there is severe deterioration to address. In 2003 a heatwave in France caused significant damage to the leather bellows of the organ and to other parts. The proposed work to be undertaken now includes restoring those parts which have deteriorated due to normal wear and tear over the decades, and reconstitute those new elements that have been lost or modified, in order to restore the organ faithfully to its original state.

## ***The Crypt of the Upper Basilica and the Relics of Saint Bernadette***



The presence of the relics of St. Bernadette in the Crypt of the Upper Basilica is pivotal in importance for the renewal of the Sanctuary for the future. Bernadette, the messenger of Our Lady, has a vital place in the liturgical life of Lourdes and the pilgrim experience.

Major restoration of the Crypt Chapel, Chapels of Saint Joan of Arc and Saint Anne, as well as the side chapels is required (stonework, ex voto plaques, replacement of liturgical furniture).

Crypt Chapel



Chapel of Saint Joan of Arc



Chapel of Saint Anne



# *The Parvis Towers*



These two smaller Parvis towers with their magnificently crafted lead pinnacles flank the Bell Tower and were built for the fiftieth anniversary of the apparitions in 1908.

The south tower contains an elevator which serves the Rosary Basilica. The north tower was originally used by early pilgrims as a way to connect from the Grotto to the Basilica. Today it is used by the chaplains as a quick and discreet passage down to the Grotto.

Both towers have suffered major wear and tear over the years, mirroring many of the same problems found in the bell tower and spire, ie. water and frost damage, deteriorating rods, crockets and joints, and cracked stonework.

A major intervention will attempt to repair and restore the original features where possible, otherwise replacement with new stonework and metal will be used to restore the century old towers to a new and safe condition.

# Accessibility, adapting the facilities for all



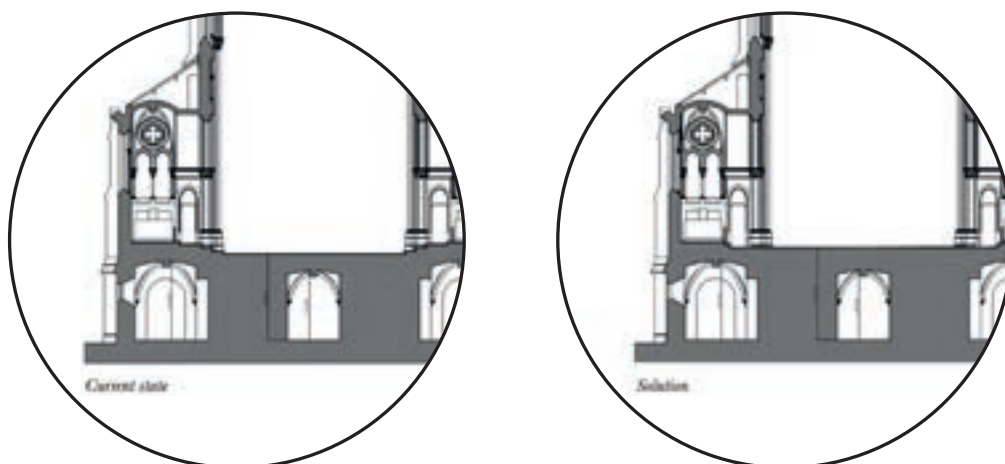
## *Nave area of the Upper Basilica*

While the Upper Basilica represents one of the most important places for pilgrims in the Sanctuary, as the “chapel” requested by the Blessed Virgin Mary, currently wheelchair users and people who have difficulty walking are unable to move around the Upper Basilica easily.

The only access for wheelchairs to the Basilica is through the South door, from the public road, Avenue Mgr Théas. Once inside, during mass and other celebrations, the capacity for wheelchairs is insufficient and impractical, in front of the first row of benches at the bottom of the altar steps..

Access around inside the Basilica is complicated by an number of issues : the central main aisle is only 103 cm wide, the benches cannot be moved and the side aisles are two steps above the floor level of the Basilica.

While preserving the heritage elements and the particular atmosphere in the Upper Basilica, planned work will address these issues to give free access to all parts of the church.



# ***Improvement of access from Avenue Mgr Théas***

The current ramp to the Upper Basilica on the South side was built about 30 years ago. It is a very steep path and not to standard. It should be replaced with a softer ramp (5% with landings). It will start perpendicular to the current gate further West; that gate has pillars made in Arrudy stone and a beautiful ironwork. It will lead to the current South door of the Basilica, perpendicular to the last span of the nave. This operation will be coupled with the redevelopment of the existing space at the Crypt level.

## **Works planned:**

- demolition of the existing concrete structure
- construction of a new concrete structure (foundations, poles, and beams)
- modification and raising of the on-street low wall made of coursed rubble-stone and cut stone
- construction of a facade made of coursed rubble-stone and cut stone, at the Crypt level, on the North slope side
- construction of drywalls, including insulation and counter walls
- construction of internal partitions
- supply and installation of doors and windows
- construction of metal balustrades with stone blocks that would have the same layout as the structures of the staircase in place descending to the Grotto
- renovation of interior floors
- interior design (heating, electricity, sanitary, etc.)
- construction of the cover slab forming the floor of the ramp: concrete slab including sealing and construction of a pavement in Arrudy stone
- outdoor lighting integrated into the blocks made of masonry

## **The Sanctuary's land extends to both sides of the Avenue Mgr Théas.**

To the North, the Basilica and its upper esplanade: giving access to the Basilica itself and the Crypt. On its South side is the departure for the Stations of the Cross (Espélegues) and the buildings for use by pilgrims.

At this point the avenue is wide, and vehicle traffic is relatively low.

The Avenue is bordered by a fence which is deficient in terms of positioning, architectural quality and anti-intrusion protection. The improvement of this space is to be coordinated with that of the road space.

Avenue Mgr Théas is a public road. Of course, the any work has to be validated with the municipality of Lourdes.

# ***Facilitating access from the Grotto and St. Joseph's Gate***

After studying several scenarios for the realization of a path for people in wheelchairs, this would be a possible solution with no big changes that would not be acceptable.

- The overall slope is 6%; a smaller slope would require 'going back and forth' and build very big retaining walls.
- The slope of the high part of the road that leads to St. Joseph's Gate is 8%. Therefore, a 6%-maximum path must be found, which

is longer, from the bottom crossroads.

The scenario also takes into account the direct connection between the gate and the direct path to the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception (the layout of the door must be rethought, to make the connection easier).

In order to get road with a 5% slope in the West part (before the tower) it will be necessary to deviate the road for the vehicles (in blue) and modify the slope (12%) to join the new path at the right level.

- In the red dotted central part, another version with a 6,2% slope to avoid retaining walls of 2 meters (between points 380.15 and 383.90).
- Old levels are marked as well as the differences between current and future states.
- The width of the road is 2.40 m with rest areas every 20 meters approximately.



## ***The Bell Tower and Spire***



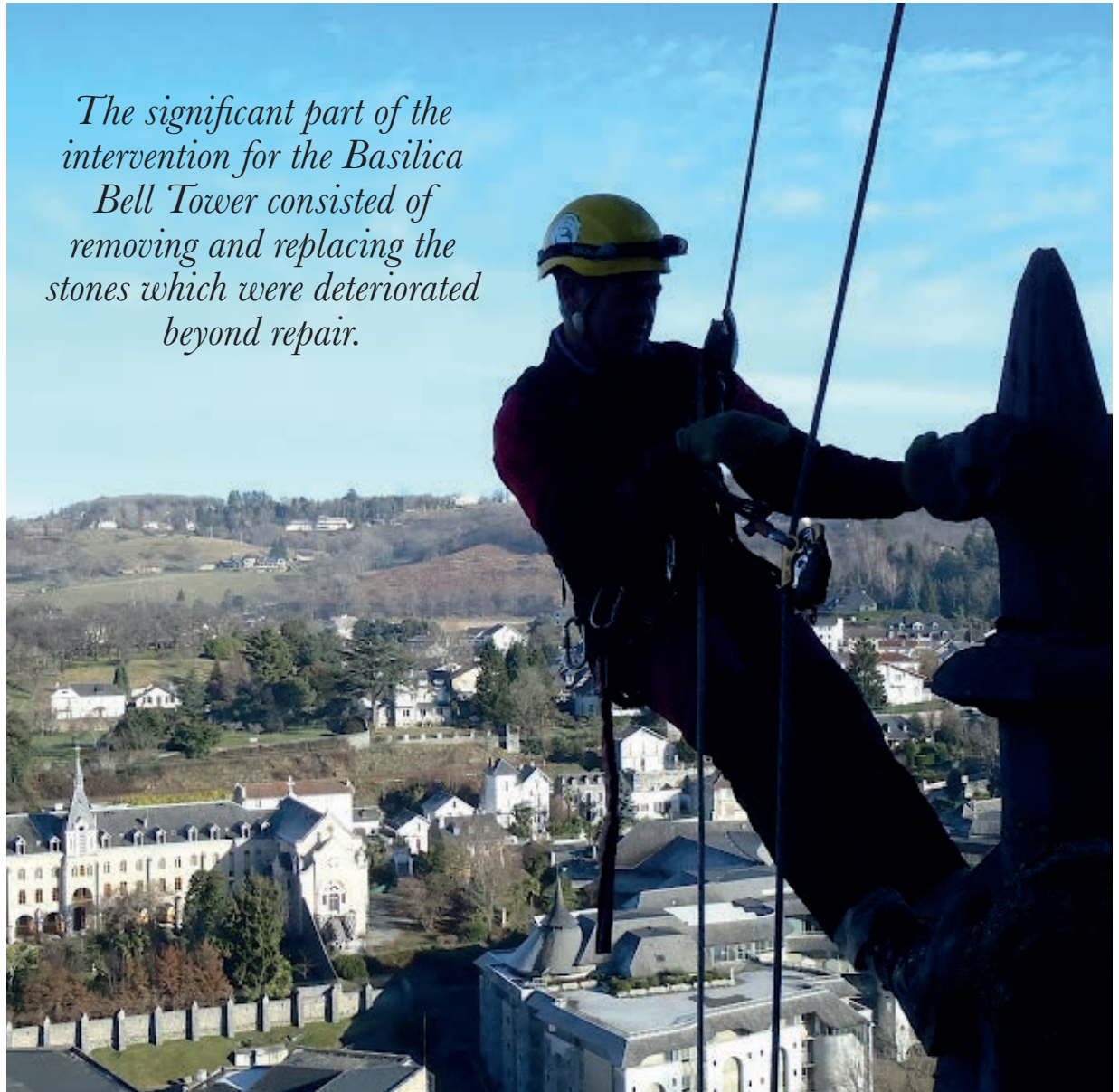
There has been little intervention on the Bell Tower and Spire since 1877. Due to extensive wear and tear, water damage, erosion and fissures caused by earthquakes in the area over 140 years, major interventions were required. Due to the urgent nature of the situation, and the opportunity presented by the pandemic with no or few pilgrims present, the Sanctuary advanced the funds in order for the work to be completed on the Bell Tower and Spire.



### The elements requiring restoration

- Upper Spire
- Lower Spire
- 4 pinnacle towers and 4 gable walls
- Lancet windows and Bell Chamber
- Bell Tower
- Entrance Gate
- Parvis Staircase
- Belfry
- Bell Tower Clock





### **These include**

- The stone facings.
- The crockets which have become fragile and were in danger of falling away.
- The cracked colonettes were completely replaced while retaining the original tie rods.
- Reconstruction of all the facing joints which have suffered a lot from repeated frosts over the past 140 years.
- The cracks and fissures which are also a result of the frequency of earthquakes in the area. The worst cases appear towards the end of the spiral staircase, located at the junction of the bell tower and the nave. These were 'stitched' together.
- The clockface and hands requiring restoration and re-gilding.
- The beams of the original structure strengthened with a metal frame.

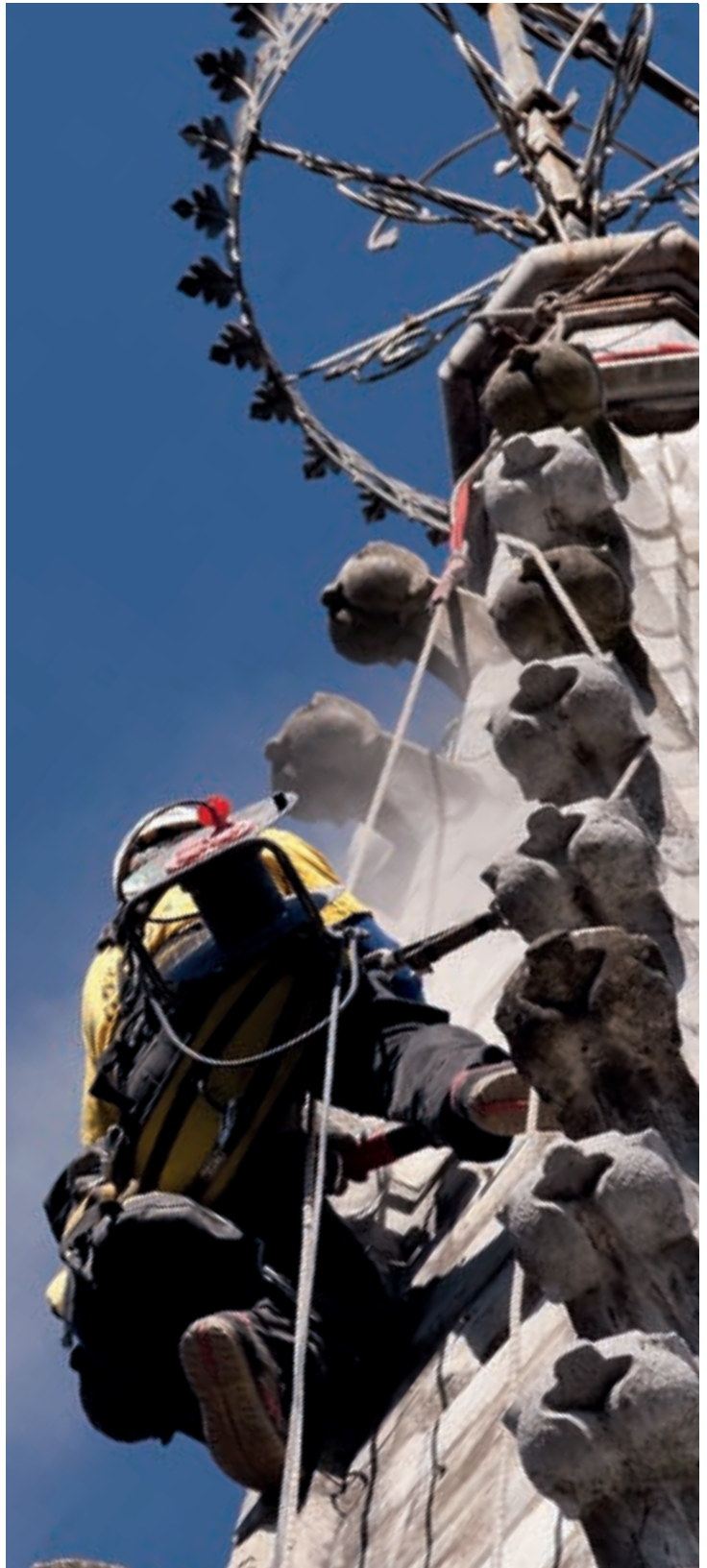
## ***How was this achieved?***

Where possible, an ‘identical’ restoration was necessary, substituting like for like. Where areas of the Bell Tower were too damaged to be preserved or reused, a major intervention was required.

As identified thus far, the non-salvageable elements are essentially those areas that are cracked and disintegrating, ie. the crockets on the spire, the parts of the balusters supporting the four smaller conical turrets, and any stones in which the staples or metal fasteners have rusted and caused the stone to shatter. (This particularly concerned the top part of the spire where the cross shaft is attached).

The original metal reinforcements to the Bell Tower were reused after cleaning and an anti-rust treatment applied, or they were replaced if, after removal, the parts connected to the stonework prove to be too damaged to be reused.

Similarly, almost all of the balusters supporting the four conical turrets needed to be removed and replaced.



# ***Architectural Carvings***

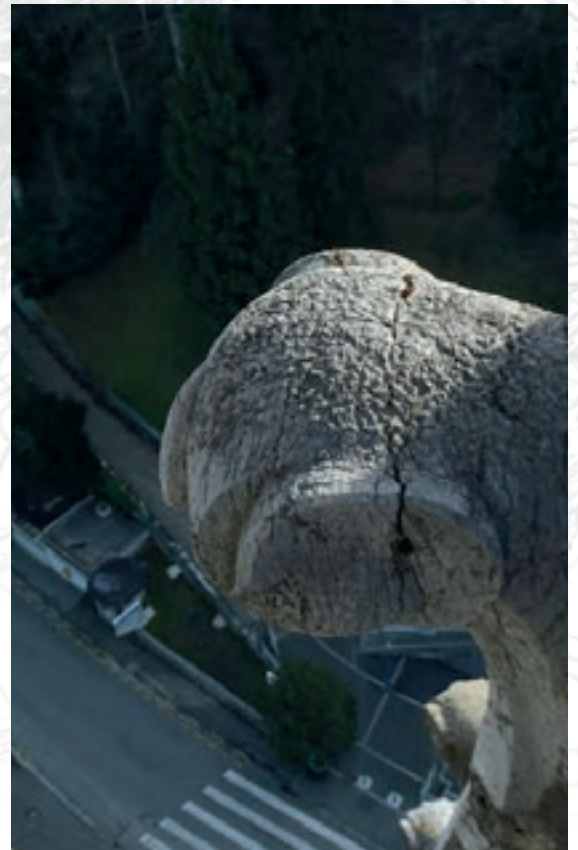
Damaged carvings on the façade of the Bell Tower needed to be faithfully reproduced by conservation craftsmen. During restoration, the parts that could be reinstated were carefully numbered in order to respect the authenticity of every piece of stonework.



## ***Water damage***

The spire is particularly prone to water damage. The masonry has allowed water infiltration over the many decades, and therefore the water tightness of the spire is particularly poor. This has resulted in water entering the joints, which is very dangerous for a building that is frequently subject to seasonal frost.

Hence, particular care needed to be paid to the joints. First, the damaged joints that have suffered from water penetration will need to be extensively chiselled out before being repaired. Secondly, the joints in the areas that were to be removed needed to be fitted with a slightly sloped chamfered edge to help the water to run off. This work is labour intensive and extremely delicate, particularly around the summit of the tower. Thirdly, the mortar for the masonry and for the repair of the joints were filled with hydraulic lime in order to ensure an effective sealant.



## ***Cleaning treatment***

The Bell Tower, after decades being subjected to bad weather, has taken on a particular 'patina'. It was particularly bad on the north and west sides. After a light 'scrub' cleaning in order to ensure accurate matching of all the facings, a light lime treatment was applied. This process has already been used satisfactorily on stonework in the nave.



## ***Metal work and joinery***

The wrought iron works had more or less deteriorated, attacked by rust. They needed to be removed and restored before being put back in place. Prior to this they were cleaned and coated with an anti-rust treatment.



## ***Bell Tower Cross***

The visible part of the high cross atop the Bell Tower required special treatment due to the materials with which it was constructed. The shaft was fitted with a welded collar to prevent the water which runs along the cross from entering the summit stone. The bays were fitted with louvred oak shutters. Those on the west and north sides were replaced exactly as they were before. The others were restored as much as possible.



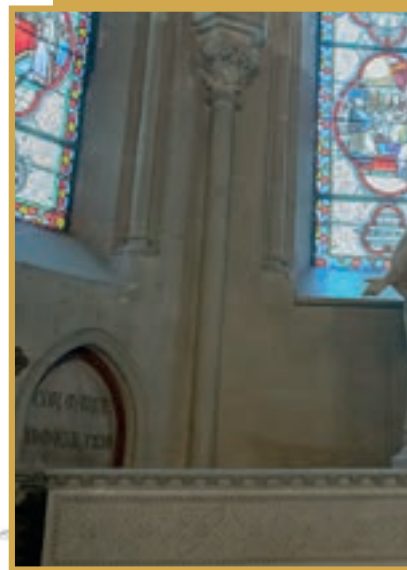
## Naming opportunities

# The Side Chapels in the Upper Basilica

Chapel of Our Lady of Mount Carmel



Chapel of the



Chapel of Our Lady of Victories



All benefactors who contribute to the restoration of the Upper Basilica will be recorded in chronological order of their donation in the Benefactors' Book which will be displayed near the relics of Saint Bernadette in the Crypt of the Upper Basilica.

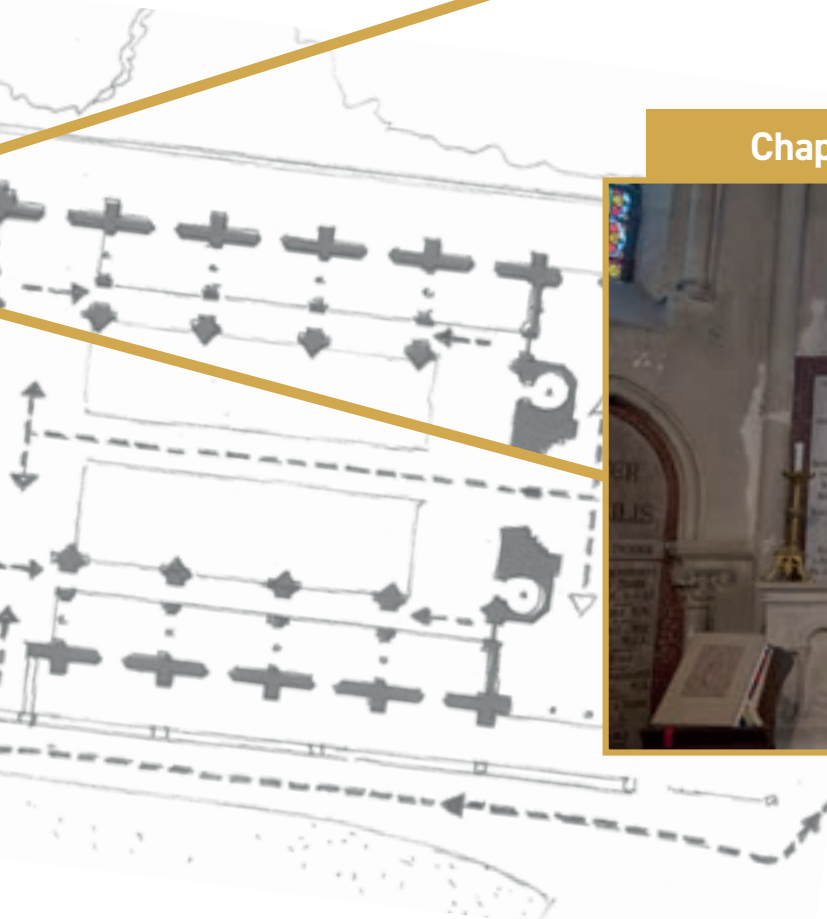
At the entrance to the Upper Basilica a plaque will be installed with the names of the benefactors who give a donation of €100,000 or more as a perpetual commemoration of their generosity.

Individual plaques will be inscribed with the names of generous benefactors. For a donation from an individual or family of €1.5m a plaque will be placed in one of the five Side Chapels behind the Sanctuary in the Upper Basilica or the two Side Chapels at the entrance to the Upper Basilica. For a donation of € 2.5m a plaque will be placed at the entrance to the Bell Tower in the Upper Basilica, and for a donation of € 2m a plaque will be installed on one of the two Parvis Towers.

**Sacred Heart**



**Chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary**



**Chapel of Our Lady of La Salette**



# LOURDES, a unique place of Prayer and Healing for the World

- In 1858 Our Lady appeared to Saint Bernadette 18 times over 5 months. During the apparitions, Our Lady told Saint Bernadette: “I am the Immaculate Conception” “Go and tell the priests to build a chapel here”, and “Have the people come here in procession”.
- The Basilica of the Immaculate Conception was built and then consecrated in 1876 as the answer to Our Lady’s request. It stands right above the Grotto, at the head of the large esplanade where processions take place daily. After the Grotto, it is the most symbolic place of the Sanctuary of Lourdes.
- Lourdes welcomes almost 4 million pilgrims every year, making it one of the most important Sanctuaries of the Catholic faith. Its charisma is to be a place for healing of souls and bodies.
- In its 165-year history, there have been 70 official cures recognized by the Church, but over 7000 cases have been officially investigated and over 100,000 claims of cures by the faithful. An International Medical Bureau is in charge of investigating the claims of cure.
- The Sanctuary has 30 permanent chaplains and 60 masses are celebrated every day during the season.
- There has been no major intervention on the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception since 1951. Since late 2020 the Sanctuary has carried out and mainly self-financed some extremely urgent work which was required on the Bell Tower and Spire.



# Overall Budget



## RESTORATION:

€

Interior of the Basilica	4 393 872
Interior of the Crypt	1 580 796

## IMPROVEMENTS AND DECORATION:

Interior of the Basilica	1 545 264
Interior of the Crypt	343 980
Creation of a ramp suitable for wheelchair users	833 112

## PERIPHERAL OPERATIONS:

Restoration of the two Parvis towers	1 150 380
Reorganisation of road outside the Basilica	591 192
Improved access from the Grotto to the Upper Basilica	3 007 368
Improved access from St Joseph's gate to the Upper Basilica	2 109 240

## REMAINING TARGET:

€ 15 555 204

## URGENT WORK CARRIED OUT DURING THE PANDEMIC (2020/2021):

Renovation of the Bell Tower and Spire of the Upper Basilica	2 035 000
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## TOTAL PROGRAM FOR THE UPPER BASILICA:

€ 17 550 204



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