

LET US PRAY

Prayer to Mary

by Fr Léonce de Grandmaison

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
preserve in me the heart of a child,
pure and clean like spring water;
a simple heart that does not remain absorbed ...
in its own sadness;
a loving heart
that freely gives with compassion;
a faithful and generous heart
that neither forgets good
nor feels bitterness for any evil.
Give me a sweet and humble heart
that loves without asking
to be loved in return,
happy to lose itself
in the heart of others,
sacrificing itself in front
of your Divine Son;
a great and unconquerable heart
which no ingratitude can close
and no indifference can tire;
a heart tormented by the glory of Christ,
pierced by His love
with a wound that will not heal
until heaven.

A PILGRIM REFLECTS

"Pilgrimage is a journey of the heart. A pilgrimage to Lourdes is one of the ways in which, in a short week, you may find that you travel further and deeper in your heart than in any other week of your life."

"How to describe such a place? The best way to understand it is to go there, if you can. It is hard to put it in words; in Lourdes, people come to life. We are led to a deeper love and faith through our service to the sick and disabled as a helper, medic or as an accompanying pilgrim, young or old."

"We live a foretaste of heaven when we do what Jesus asked us to do and bring the weak and poor to the centre of our lives. In the process, we discover our own vulnerabilities. This gives rise to a real connection with other human beings and the chance to discover healthy and lifegiving habits – of frequenting the sacraments, taking the time to pray, and learning the joy of responsibly serving others. It also leads to a realisation that as church and community, we can make an impact on people's lives. Our faith is not restricted to attending church services it is about building a more just and fairer society, for this reason, we say that Lourdes is love in action."

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"As we welcome the relics of St Bernadette... we are also reminded of the special significance of Lourdes as a place of pilgrimage and of love, where people of all ages serve and care for the sick and the most vulnerable in our society. I would encourage those who are able to, to consider continuing the journey begun by the relics of St Bernadette, joining with people from their parishes and dioceses to travel on pilgrimage to Lourdes."

Cardinal Vincent Nichols



EXPERIENCE THE RELIC TOUR OF ST BERNADETTE



VISIT THE ST BERNADETTE RELIC TOUR WEBSITE TO DISCOVER:

Where and when you can visit the Relics
How to keep the tour in your prayers
Opportunities to journey to Lourdes on pilgrimage with your diocese and much more...

stbernadette.org.uk



OUR INVITATION

We hope that your personal encounter with St Bernadette during the Relic Tour pilgrimage might inspire and encourage you to visit the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in France. Details about organised pilgrimages from your diocese can be found by scanning the QR code or visiting:



stbernadette.org.uk/continuing-the-journey/

We hope to meet you in Lourdes one day. Come and see!

"I SHALL DO EVERYTHING FOR HEAVEN, MY TRUE HOME. THERE I SHALL FIND MY MOTHER IN ALL THE SPLENDOR OF HER GLORY. I SHALL DELIGHT WITH HER IN THE JOY OF JESUS HIMSELF."

ST BERNADETTE

EXPERIENCE THE RELIC TOUR OF ST BERNADETTE

RELICS AND US

RECEIVING A PLENARY INDULGENCE

In September and October this year, the relics of St Bernadette will journey on pilgrimage to England, Scotland, and Wales for the very first time. This very special once in a lifetime event will provide an opportunity for people of all ages and backgrounds to experience the special gifts and charisms of Lourdes, in a church or cathedral near them.

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“The pilgrimage St Bernadette’s relics will undertake this Autumn offers us a welcome opportunity to bear active witness to our Faith, joining with one another across our many communities to encounter God’s love and find spiritual, emotional, and psychological healing and renewal.”

Cardinal Vincent Nichols

ST BERNADETTE’S STORY

Bernadette Soubirous was born in 1844 in a small town in France. St Bernadette was one of eight children born into a very poor family. Although initially unremarkable, Bernadette’s life was to inspire generations of people to journey in faith on pilgrimage to Lourdes.

Between 11 February and 16 July 1858, Bernadette saw the Virgin Mary eighteen times in a series of Apparitions that took place in a cave on the outskirts of Lourdes, a place known as the Grotto of Massabielle. In the course of these miraculous encounters, Bernadette, then aged just 14, became the friend and confidante of Our Lady, the mother of Jesus.

The Apparitions of Lourdes were authenticated in 1862 by the Bishop of Tarbes. In 1866, Bernadette left Lourdes to live out her religious vocation within the community of the Sisters of Charity of Nevers. She died in 1879, was proclaimed Blessed in 1925, and was canonised as a Saint in 1933.

The life and legacy of St Bernadette has touched the lives of people across the world. 164 years after the first pilgrimages to this special place began, Lourdes is one of the busiest Christian pilgrimage sites in the world, with the Catholic Church acknowledging 70 miracles as having taken place there.

A relic is a part of the physical remains of a saint after their death, or an object which has been in contact with them. The veneration of relics is rooted in the natural human instinct to treat anything connected with those we love, who have died, with care and reverence. From the earliest days of the Church, the bodies of saints were held in special veneration, and in Rome, prayers were said and Masses celebrated in the catacombs, the burial places of saints and martyrs. Simply put, relics help us feel close to a holy person, making the communion of saints more real and fostering in each of us a desire to be like them – to be holy.



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“By inviting us to venerate the mortal remains of the martyrs and saints, the Church does not forget that, in the end, these are indeed just human bones, but they are bones that belonged to individuals touched by the transcendent power of God. The relics of the saints are traces of that invisible but real presence which sheds light upon the shadows of the world and reveals the Kingdom of Heaven in our midst.”

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

A Plenary - meaning full - Indulgence is the result of the abundance of God’s mercy, which He offers us and all humanity through Jesus Christ and through the Church. Receiving this Indulgence is a sign of “our turning away from sin and our conversion to God” (Pope St John Paul II). As the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, “An indulgence is obtained through the Church who, by virtue of the power of binding and loosing granted her by Christ Jesus, intervenes in favour of individual Christians and opens for them the treasury of the merits of Christ and the saints to obtain from the Father of mercies the remission of the temporal punishment due for their sins. Thus, the Church does not want simply to come to the aid of these Christians, but also to spur them to works of devotion, penance, and charity” (CCC 1478).

This Indulgence, this gift, is available in a special way for those who visit the relics of St Bernadette this Autumn. You can receive the Indulgence by:

- Visiting the relics
- Having a real contrition for, and a detachment from, sin, including all venial sins
- Celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation and receiving Holy Communion
- Praying for the intentions of the Holy Father for example: the Creed, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Glory be...

The indulgence can be received for ourselves, or for the benefit of others, living or departed.

