

# Behold Thy Mother

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Veni Sancte Spiritus per Mariam!

Missionary Sisters of the Holy Ghost  
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Dear Readers,

Growing up, as a little girl, in a suburb of Detroit, Michigan, we were not far from Canada. Crossing the Detroit River over the Ambassador Bridge, or going under the Windsor Tunnel, was always exciting. As thrilling as this was, nothing could be more impressive as the shrines that awaited us. Canada has everything from Notre Dame du Cap, St. Anne de Beaupre, Brother Andre's Shrine of St. Joseph, to the Shrine of the North American Martyrs. Visiting shrines seemed to be a very natural part of our Catholic life.

Many pilgrimages were arranged through our parish, and when we were not in Canada, we went, as a group, to places like Carey, Ohio, where the beautiful Shrine of Our Lady of Consolation awaits the throngs of people who visit her, hoping for peace in their sufferings, or a complete cure.

While visiting this shrine as a little girl, I had the unique privilege of being part of what the Franciscans considered a miracle. The rain was literally pouring down and there was no way we were not going to get drenched. The priest decided to go ahead with the procession anyway. As we began, the water came down on both sides of the people, yet we were completely dry in the line as we walked. I could not believe my eyes as I prepared this issue. I decided to add in the shrine at Carey, and read in the article that a miracle of the same type happened, when they were transferring the image of Our Lady. What an awesome privilege to have this happen again, the year we were there!

I am very glad that my parents took us to so many shrines and taught us the value of pilgrimages. St. Alphonsus Liguori says that lovers of Mary are fond of visiting shrines and churches dedicated in her honor.

With this issue, I hope to begin to introduce you to the value of visiting shrines and the part they play, in our lives, and even in the history of the world. This issue begins with Lourdes, and throughout this year, we will take you through La Salette and Fatima, to show you their significance in the Church, and how each of their messages are for our times.

At Lourdes, we see Mary asking for penance and the praying of the Rosary. At La Salette, Mary is begging us not to work on Sunday. Fatima crowns both by beginning with the words, "Man has not heeded my warnings at Lourdes and La Salette." With those words Our Lady repeated the necessity of praying the Rosary for World Peace, giving us the wonderful, "Peace Plan from Heaven."

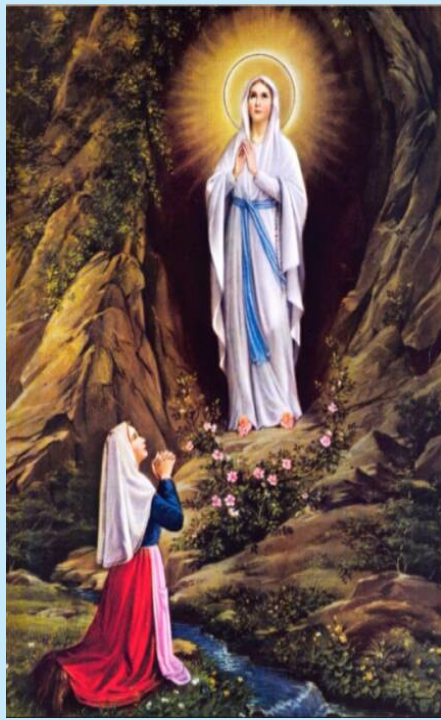
I pray that these next three issues will inspire you and your family to desire to know what Mary has said at each of these points in time. She desires action, by praying the family Rosary each night, and adding sacrifice in your life, for souls.

My prayers and the prayers of our Sisters are with you. We thank you for your prayers and for your support.

In the Hearts of Jesus and Mary,

*Reverend Mother Marie de Montfort, cmss*

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#### *Village of St. Bernadette*

*I've travelled far,  
the land and the sea,  
beautiful places  
I happened to be.  
One little town,  
I'll never forget,  
is Lourdes  
the villiage of St. Bernadette,*

*Ave, Ave, Ave Maria!  
Ave, Ave, Ave Maria!*

*There like a dream,  
this wonderful night,  
I gazed at the grotto  
aglow in the night.  
A feeling divine,  
swept over me there,  
I fell to my knees,  
as I whispered the prayer,*

*Ave, Ave, Ave Maria!  
Ave, Ave, Ave Maria!*

#### **Morning Offering**

**(In the spirit of Holy Slavery)**

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in reparation for my sins, I offer Thee all my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day and of my entire life, for all the intentions of Thy Most Sacred Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass validly and licitly offered this day throughout the world, the infinite graces and merits thereof to be dispensed in accord with Thy Divine Will for the salvation of souls, the conversion of sinners, and the special intention recommended for this month:

#### **Intentions for:**

**January:** Sanctification of home and family, truly Catholic marriages.

**February:** The spread of the true Catholic Faith through the spread of devotion to Mary.

**March:** An increase in pious and holy religious vocations.

**April:** For all of the missionary endeavors throughout the world and unity among the members of the Church Militant.



#### **Visiting Mary's Shrines**

By

St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori

Father Segneri says that the devil could think of no better way to make good his losses from the destruction of idolatry, than by goading the heretics on to attack sacred images, but Holy Church has defended images even with the blood of martyrs. And the blessed Mother has proved by miracles how pleasing to her are visits paid to her shrines.

St. John Damascene had his hand cut off for daring to defend the icons of Mary by his writings, but Our Lady miraculously restored it to him. Father Spinelli relates that in Constantinople a veil

covering a picture of the Blessed Virgin used to draw itself aside every Saturday, and then after Vespers closed again of its own accord. The veil over a picture of our Blessed Lady that St. John of the Cross used to visit was once withdrawn the same way. The sacristan, thinking that the saint was a robber, kicked him, but his foot at once withered.

Lovers of Mary are fond of visiting shrines and churches dedicated in her honor. St. John Damascene calls these places "cities of refuge" where we can be safe from temptation and the punish-



ment we have deserved for our sins. The first thing that the Emperor St. Henry used to do on entering a city was to visit a church dedicated to Mary. Father Thomas Sanchez would never return home without having visited some church named after her.

Let us therefore not regard it as too much of a burden to visit our Queen every day in some church or chapel, or even in our own home, where we can have a quiet place set aside as a little oratory, with her statue or picture, which we can keep decorated with drapery, flowers, candles or lights. Before it, we should recite the litany, Rosary, and other prayers. For this purpose, I have published a little book (which has already been reprinted many times) of visits to the Blessed Sacrament as well as to the Blessed Virgin, for everyday in the month. A devout client of Mary could also arrange to have one of her feasts celebrated in a church or chapel with greater solemnity than it would otherwise be -- perhaps by having it preceded by a novena, with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and



even with sermons.

May I here relate a fact recorded by Father Spinelli in his book *Miracles of the Madonna*. In the year 1611, on the vigil of Pentecost, an immense crowd of people had gathered at the celebrated shrine of Mary at Montevergine. While the people were profaning the feast with dances, drunkenness, and immodest acts, a fire suddenly broke out in the hall, and in less than an hour and a half the building was reduced to ashes and more than fifteen hundred persons perished.

Five people who escaped swore that they had seen the Mother of God herself set fire to the place with two torches. I implore all lovers of Mary, therefore, to keep far away from such places on

her feasts, and if they are able to do so, to prevent others from going there. Such occasions afford more honor to the devil than they do to the Blessed Virgin. Let those who are devoted to the Blessed Mother visit her shrines, to be sure, but not as an occasion for merrymaking and sin.

(The little booklet St. Alphonsus was speaking of in this article is called *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin Mary*.)

*Three main shrines of Our Lady  
where thousands of pilgrims come each year.*



**Shrine at  
Lourdes, France**

Our Lady appeared  
to  
St. Bernadette

**Shrine at  
La Salette**

Our Lady appeared  
to Melanie and  
Maximin



**Shrine at  
Fatima, Portugal**

Our Lady appeared  
to Jacinta, Francisco  
and Lucia



## *Shrines of Our Lady Are Very Much a Part of the World's Story*

Excerpts from: Shrines to Our Lady  
Around the World  
by Zsolt Aradi

Our Lady has been venerated on every continent and in every period of Christian history. From the Holy Land to the far reaches of the New World her image is to be found, and before that image rises the "Salve Regina" of incalculable millions of men, echoing in their prayers the glorious "Ave Maria" of the Angel. The veneration of Mary is a living faith. It has a historical and a supernatural dimension.

Historically speaking, the shrines to Our Lady are very much a part of the world's story -- of crusade and conquest, martyrdom and sainthood -- as the works of historians, archeologists and scientists show. However, the role of these shrines in history is not a statistic on, belonging merely to the past. Quite the contrary. At this very instant, the cumulative effect of a dynamic faith through centuries quickens new generations to prayer.

At these shrines man's



**Lourdes and Fatima  
stand like bridges between the  
natural and the supernatural.**

sense of his supernatural is deeply felt. Here the temporal and the eternal seem to touch. Lourdes and Fatima stand like bridges between the natural and the supernatural. The veneration of Mary in these holy places has a meaning of which the historical import is merely a suggestion, as time is but the shadow of eternity and her material image but a faint reflection of her beauty. We live within the confines of history and the world, but our end is beyond. Man wants to believe, to keep the faith, to hope against all odds and all signs of doom. The woman carved in marble or painted on a piece of cardboard in these shrines



**The Cathedral of Chartres**

represents *The Hope*. Without this hope no individual and no nation can exist. We praise Her, the most magnificent of all the created, but the glory belongs to the Creator alone.

The veneration of Mary can be explained in terms of theology and dogma, but it would be a hard task to explain the extent of this veneration, its constancy and the fact that it is not limited to Christians.

Great works of art have been inspired by man's devotion to the Madonna, but it should be borne in mind that these are not merely museum pieces. The great Cathedral at Chartres or the Shrine to Our Lady of Pompeii built around a painting bought in a junk shop for less than a dollar by a penniless man -- both are expressions of a living faith.

The shrines of Our Lady around the world, did not

come into being simply because a group of people decided to build them or simply because of some excitable and credulous enthusiasm. They were built by constant faith.

For the believer, these places were created by the inspiration of the Great Lady. It is her will, in the last analysis.

The Christian who accepts the reality of the supernatural, listens with respect to her messages. She is the intermediary. She speaks of God's love for man and she asks that man love God and his neighbor, which very often means sacrifice and penance. But there is also great joy and enthusiasms in the veneration of Mary, for she is man's intermediary to God. She is the Mother who understands all and so gives us a Joy we can share. She intercedes for all and so gives us a common hope.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin has brought unity into the very fabric of a nations' history, it has brought together nations torn by civil strife and strengthened the dwindling faith of an isolated or oppressed people. Our Lady, in drawing men to God through her, draws them together.



## *Shrine of Our Lady of Consolation Carey, Ohio*

Excerpt from Shrine Pamphlet

In the year 1594 the Jesuit fathers came to Luxemburg to found a college for boys. One of the early teachers at the college, Fr. Broquart, in his associations with the peoples of Luxemburg, learned that the citizens of the city were accustomed to Sunday walking through the countryside and that they were considering building a wayside shrine in the outskirts of the city. Fr. Broquart was very enthused about the idea. He envisioned, however, more than a mere wayside shrine so common in Europe. He considered a chapel as a better answer to the need, a place where several of the faithful could gather in common prayer.

Such a project was dependent on funds and a promoter. Fr. Broquart took the initiative. Not far distant from the city the priest found a delightful wooded section very suitable for a pilgrimage chapel. He easily persuaded the owners of the land to



**Miraculous Image of  
Our Lady of Consolation**

donate it to the Blessed Mother for a shrine. In 1624 the spot was dedicated by the erection of a large wooden cross.

Work on the chapel began. The building soon took shape. In the midst of it all came one of the worst catastrophies of the ages -- the bubonic plague. Scores of people were suddenly stricken by the disease, suffered and died. The death toll was so staggering that one historian, writing of the times, had to say, "neither grave diggers nor cemeteries



The first Mass was celebrated in the new Shrine Church in 1921 and the edifice was dedicated in 1925 on the occasion of the golden jubilee of the parish. Marble altars were consecrated on May 4, 1930. On the following Sunday, the Image of Our Lady of Consolation was enshrined upon the altar where it now stands. The church has stained glass windows, modeled after those of the Cathedral of Chartre, France.

could be found adequate to bury the many dead". In their anguish and dread of death the people fervently invoked the aid of Mary, Consoler of the Afflicted.

Many of the workmen building the chapel fell victims to the dread disease, as did also Fr. Broquart.

Soon the priest became critically ill. Lying at death's door he dedicated himself more completely to the Blessed Mother. He was possessed with the desire to complete the chapel he had started. He must live to see the work finished. Were he

to die there would be no one to foster the project. He prayed. He promised. He made vows. The boils of the disease burst. The inflammation and fever subsided. Soon he was on his feet. The people were amazed and excited over the wondrous cure of the lovable priest.

As he lay dying though, Fr. Broquart pondered what title he would give the new chapel. It was then that he conceived the idea of Our Lady of Consolation. It seemed most fitting for the Blessed Virgin during that time of sore distress and

Upon his recovery, Fr. Broquart resumed work on the chapel and within a year Mass was celebrated in honor of Our Lady of Consolation. At the time of its dedication, a statue of Our Lady, Consoler of the Afflicted, was placed over the altar.



anguish. After his recovery he discussed the matter with the other priests of the college. They all agreed that the title was most appropriate.

The origin of the Image is shrouded in mystery. The best legend tells that a group of the Jesuit seminarians, while walking in the woods discovered it. They placed it in their college chapel. It disappeared overnight. They later found it again, this time installing it in the new chapel. There it remained.

People came regularly to

the new chapel to pray and venerate the Image of Our Lady of Consolation. Several years after its construction, a very spectacular happening took place. The daughter of one of the high city officials was cured through prayers to Our Lady of Consolation. Other cures soon came to the attention of the authorities. Several of them were recognized as true miracles.

The cure of the girl made the Luxemburg Shrine known far and wide. People from other cities and countries began to make pilgrim-

ages. Finally, the chapel had to be enlarged and later it was necessary to take the Statue into the city Cathedral that all the crowds could be accommodated. Then Our Lady of Consolation was proclaimed as patroness of the Duchy of Luxemburg.

Devotion to Our Lady of Consolation found its way from that country to this, in the latter part of the last century. When the natives of Luxemburg migrated to America they took with them the traditions of their homeland, especially their deep-rooted devotion to Mary, Consoler of the Afflicted, the patroness of their nation. The priests that came with them were very active in spreading this devotion.

Of special note is the Rev. Joseph Gloden who migrated to this country late in the 1800 's. While yet a cleric in the seminary, Fr. Gloden vowed to the Blessed Virgin that the first church he would build should be dedicated to Our Lady of Consolation. About the year 1870 Fr. Gloden was made pastor of St. Nicholas Church in what is now known as Frenchtown, Ohio.

Attached to his parish was

the Mission of Carey. There the people had begun the construction of a frame church under the patronage of St. Edward.

To Fr. Gloden was given the task of completing the new church. Mindful of his vow to the Mother of God, Fr. Gloden first asked the people, then the bishop if he might change the name from St. Edward to Our Lady of Consolation. His request met with unanimous approval.

Having fulfilled his vow, Fr. Gloden now studied the possibility of transplanting the devotion of Our Lady of Consolation in Carey. At first he desired only a statue of the Consoler of the Afflicted. Later the idea of a Shrine in her honor captivated him. Fr. Gloden dispatched several men of the parish to Luxemburg to obtain a replica of the famous statue of Our Lady revered there.

Upon the arrival of the statue at St. Nicholas the priest made arrangements for a solemn transference of the image to its new abode in Carey.

The ceremony was to consist of a Solemn High





Image of Our Lady of Luxemburg known as  
"Consolatrix Afflictorum".  
The statue at the shrine in Carey, Ohio, is an exact replica.  
Mary is truly the consolation of the afflicted.

Mass at Frenchtown, then a procession. A company of over a thousand persons took part in it. The course of the journey was more than seven miles - traversed on foot. Forty young ladies, sodalists of Mary dressed in white, carried the Image in this first grand pilgrimage.

This famous procession is well remembered for what appeared to have been Our Lady's undeniable token of approval of Carey as the place for her sanctuary.

All through the night it had rained. The rain continued

during the morning hours and the offering of the Solemn Mass. To maintain the proposed schedule for the transference of the Image seemed an impossibility. Fr. Gloden inspired by faith in the goodness of the Blessed Mother, insisted that the procession take place as planned. Hardly had the group approached the door of the church, when the rain ceased. Not a drop fell on the procession although it was very obvious that the surrounding countryside was undergoing a severe

storm. The approach into Carey seemed most ominous. The skies were black, lightning and thunder rent the heavens, yet the group of pilgrims was not disturbed. As soon as the procession had reached the shelter of the church the heavens opened and the storm broke in all violence.

News of the "mysterious" procession soon spread to the neighboring communities. Groups of people came to Carey from the surrounding cities. In a short time, people were making pilgrimages to the Shrine of Our Lady of Consolation in Carey, Ohio. Then there were cures, claims

of other wondrous favors granted through the intercession of Our Lady of Consolation.

To more firmly establish this devotion in Carey, to implant more deeply in the hearts of the faithful, love for Mary and confidence in the Consoler of the Afflicted, Fr. Gloden established a pious confraternity in honor of the Blessed Mother. The society was founded on the same general purposes and regulations as those of the mother organization in Luxemburg. In 1876 Pope Leo XIII canonically erected the Confraternity of Our Lady of Consolation in Carey.



Altar of Our Sorrowful  
Mother at Carey



Shrine Altar of Our Lady  
Consoler of the Afflicted

## *The Apparitions in the Mystery of Mary*

Excerpts taken from:  
Apparitions of Our Lady  
Their Place in the Life of the Church

Events have a meaning only as part of some greater whole. They are part of the history of an individual or a people, according to whether they take place in the life of a person or a nation. Great events are those which affect the destiny of both a person and a nation, because at that moment, the person incarnated the life of the nation.

When Joan of Arc was acclaimed by the crown gathered in the cathedral at Reims for the coronation of Charles VII, it was a great moment in her own life, and a great one in the history of France.

When we try to understand the meaning of the apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Paris, in Lourdes and at Fatima, we instinctively place them in relation to a history -- either that of a person or of a group of people.

We consider first of all the question of the visionaries themselves and next perhaps the history of the area or the

country in which the visions occur. The Lourdes apparitions were made to a little Pyrenean shepherd girl of about thirteen. They transformed her life and she became a saint - St. Bernadette. They also transformed her village into the Lourdes familiar to us through her descriptions of the apparitions, through statues, pictures and the pilgrimages. Finally, the apparitions left their mark on the life of the Church in the nineteenth century.

The Fatima apparitions occurred in 1917 at a critical moment in the history of Portugal. It should be remembered that they were given to the world as a warning and a hope in the middle of the first world war and at the beginning of the greatest social and religious revolution of all time -- that of atheistic communism. But such an approach, however valid, is not sufficient to reveal the inner meaning of these visions.

The Lourdes apparitions must not be regarded in the first instance as occurring to Bernadette. They happened, if we may put it that way, to Our Lady. To understand



### **Mary, as Queen of Heaven, Queen of the Universe!**

their eternal significance we must situate them not in the life of Bernadette Soubirous, but in that of the Blessed Virgin and in the sacred history of God's people.

To grasp the providential character of the apparitions, it is not enough to trace the history of Bernadette or even that of France and Portugal in the nineteenth century. We must study the history of Our Lady herself. The fresh evidence of her maternal tenderness provided by the apparitions is one facet of

her mystery, and we must see it in relation to the whole.

Mary's history begins with the Immaculate Conception, continues with the Annunciation and the Visitation, passes by Calvary, rises to heaven in the glory of the Assumption and is now spreading forth its splendour over the whole world.

We can understand what the apparitions ought to mean for us only by trying to realize what they mean for her, and we can grasp their deeper meaning only by



**Mary, as Queen  
of Heaven and  
earth.**

**"All this is but a  
foreshadowing  
and preparation  
for the final  
encounter, which  
will explain all  
the rest when  
Mary appears in  
glory on the day  
of Christs' return,  
standing radiant  
by the side of her  
triumphant Son."**

placing them in the right relation to the mystery of Mary. They are part of the great things that God has done for her: "Because He that is mighty hath done great things to me."

All is contained in the unfolding in time of the mystery of Mary, the unity of which is eternally visible to God. Each stage of her life prepares for the next, explains the one that preceded it, and can be understood only as part of the whole. The Annunciation and the

Divine Motherhood explain the Immaculate Conception and prepare for the co-redemption at the foot of the cross. The cross itself prepares for the glory of the Assumption.

The Assumption into a place beside her glorified Son paves the way for the effusion of grace to be dispensed through her hands, and for the manifestation of eternal tenderness just as the ascension prepared the way for Pentecost. Her presence in heaven enables her to come back to us in glory and benediction, healing and pardoning. All this is but a foreshadowing and a preparation for a final encounter, which will explain all the rest when Mary appears in glory on the day of Christs' return, standing radiant by the side of her triumphant Son.

That is how we must look on the being who appears to us in these visions. The apparitions, the special graces, the cures, the forgiveness are all extra pages in the mystery of Our Lady and not by any means the final ones. They are merely the first dawning on earth of the triumph to come.

*Mary under any title, is still our  
Queen and our Mother*



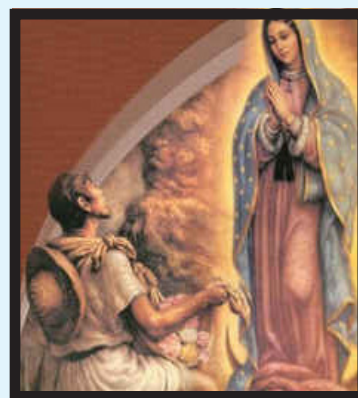
**Our Lady of  
Lourdes,  
France**



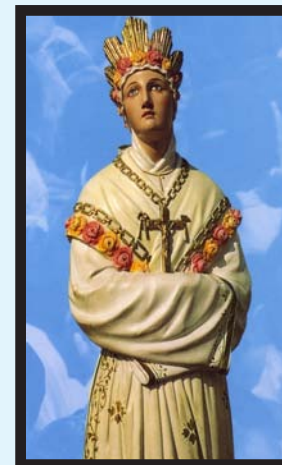
**Our Lady of Fatima,  
Portugal**



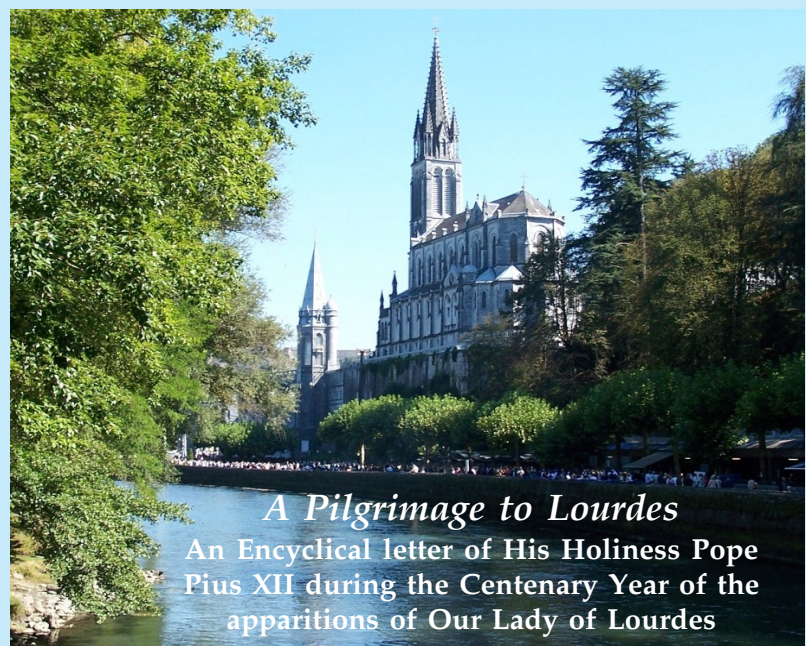
**Our Lady of  
Grace,  
France**



**Our Lady of Guadalupe,  
Mexico**



**Our Lady of La Salette,  
France**



*A Pilgrimage to Lourdes*  
An Encyclical letter of His Holiness Pope Pius XII during the Centenary Year of the apparitions of Our Lady of Lourdes

The Lourdes pilgrimage, which We had the pleasure of making, when We went to preside in the name of Our predecessor Pius XI, at the Eucharistic and Marian celebrations closing the Jubilee of the Redemption, left in Our soul deep and sweet memories. We are firmly confident that in this jubilee year, Our Lady will want to respond again with liberality to the expectations of her children. But We are especially convinced that she urges Us to recall the spiritual lessons of the apparitions and set them upon the path

which she so clearly traced for us.

These lessons, the faithful echo of the teachings of the Gospel message, throw particular light on the contrasts which oppose the judgment of God to the vain wisdom of this world. In a society, barely conscious of the ills which assail it, which conceals its miseries and injustices under an outward appearance of bright and carefree prosperity, the Immaculate Virgin, never touched by sin, showed herself to an innocent child.

With maternal compassion

she looks upon this world which has been redeemed by the blood of her Divine Son, but in which sin sows so much ruin. And on three occasions she made her urgent appeal: "Penitence, penitence, penitence!" She even appealed for outward manifestations: "Go and kiss the earth in penance for sinners." And to this gesture must be added a prayer: "You must pray to God for sinners." This same injunction was made in the time of John the Baptist, and at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, showing men the way to return to God: "Repent!" and who would dare say that this appeal for the conversion of hearts is not applicable to our times?

But how could the Mother of God come to her children except as the messenger of forgiveness and hope? The water already flows from beneath her feet: "Omnes sitientes, venite ad aquas, et haurietis salutem a Domino." (all ye who thirst, come to the waters and ye shall draw health from the Lord.). At this spring, where gentle Bernadette was the first to go and drink and wash, there will flow away all the miser-

ies of the soul and body. "And I went and washed and I see," the blind of the Gospel and the grateful pilgrim will be able to respond.

But, as it was with the crowds which pressed around Jesus, the healing of physical wounds remains as a gesture of mercy and a sign of that power which the Son of Man has to remit sins. The Virgin invites us to the blessed grotto on behalf of her Divine Son, for the conversion of the heart and in hope of pardon. Will we heed her? In this humble response of man, who admits himself to be a sinner, there resides the true greatness of this jubilee year.

The Church would have a right to expect great good, if each pilgrim to Lourdes -- and even all Christians united in heart with the centenary celebrations -- realized in the first place this action of sanctification within himself "not in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed and in truth." There is everything to invite the Christian to this action of sanctification, for nowhere except, perhaps, at Lourdes does one feel so moved to



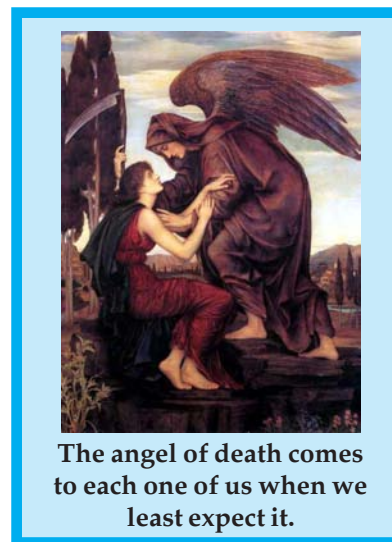
prayer, to the forgetting of oneself and to charity.

For instance, the sight of the stretcher-bearers and the serene peace of the invalids; of the fraternity which assembles faithful of all origins in one single invocation; the sight of the spontaneity of helping each other and the fervor with which without affection, the pilgrims kneel in front of the grotto. At seeing all these things, the best persons are compelled by the attraction of a life more completely dedicated to the service of God and to their brothers; the less fervent become conscious of their lukewarmness and once again return to the road of prayer; the more hardened and incredulous sinners themselves are often touched by grace, or at least if they are honest, do not remain unmoved by the testimony of this "multitude of believers with only one heart and one soul."

But this experience of a few brief days of pilgrimage does not in itself generally suffice to engrave in indelible letters the appeal of Mary for a genuine spiritual conversion. A return to a regular recep-

tion of the sacraments, to the respect of Christian morals in everyday life, and the rallying to the ranks of Catholic Action and to the various institutions recommended by the Church: is it not true that only on these conditions can the great crowds expected to gather at Lourdes in 1958 yield, according to the expectations of the Immaculate Virgin herself, the fruits of salvation so necessary to mankind today?

The world, which in our days offers so many legitimate motives for pride and security, knows also nowadays a terrible temptation to materialism, often denounced by Our predecessors and Ourselves. This materialism is not to be found only in the condemned philosophy which rules the politics and economic life of a segment of humanity. It rages also in the love of money, the ruin of which increases according to the dimensions of modern enterprises, and which unfortunately determines so many decisions which weigh on the life of the people. It expresses itself in the cult of the body, in the excessive



search for comforts and the flight from all the austerities of life. It prompts one to despise human life, the life itself which is destroyed before it is able to see the light of day.

It resides in the unrestrained search for pleasure which exhibits itself without modesty and even attempts to seduce souls which are still pure with reading matter and entertainments. It shows itself in the lack of interest of one's brother, in the selfishness which crushes man with injustice and deprives him of his rights, in a word, in that concept of life which regulates all things only in terms of material prosperity and earthly

satisfactions. "And I will say to my soul, the rich man said, Soul, thou has many good things laid up for many years; take thy ease, eat, drink, be merry. But God said to him, Thou fool, this night do they demand thy soul of thee." (Lk. 12: 19-20)

To a society which in its public life often contests the supreme rights of God, which would conquer the universe at the expense of its soul and has hastened to its own ruin, the Virgin Mother sent out a cry of alarm. Christians of every class and every nation will seek to meet one another in truth and in charity, and to banish misunderstanding and suspicion. The weight of social structures and economic pressures burdening the good will of men is undoubtedly enormous and often paralyzes it.

But if it is true as Our predecessors and We Ourselves have insistently stressed, that the question of man's social and political peace is above all a moral question, no reform can be fruitful, no agreement can be stable without a change and purification of hearts. The Virgin of Lourdes, in this jubilee year, recalls this to all

men! And if in this solicitude Mary looks upon certain of her children with special predilection, is it not, beloved sons and venerable brethren, toward the small, the poor and the afflicted whom Jesus loved so much?

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest" she seems to say together with her Divine Son. Go to her, you who are crushed by material misery, defenseless against the hardships of life and the indifference of men. Go to her, you who are in mourning and assailed by moral trials. Go to her, beloved invalids and infirm, you who are truly welcomed and honored at Lourdes as the suffering members of Our Lord. Go to her and receive peace of heart, strength for your daily duty, the joy of sacrifice offered.

The Immaculate Virgin who knows the secret ways of grace in souls and the silent work of the supernatural leaven in this world, knows the great price which God attaches to your sufferings united to those of the Savior. They can greatly contribute, We have no doubt, to this Christian

renewal of society which We implore of God through the powerful intercession of His Mother. May there be added to the prayers of the sick, of the humble, of all the pilgrims to Lourdes, that prayer to Mary that she may also turn her maternal look toward those who are still outside the limits of the only fold, the Church, so that they may come together in unity. May she look upon those who seek and are thirsty for truth, and lead them to the source of living waters.

May she cast her glance upon the immense continents and their vast human areas where Christ is unfortunately so little known, so little loved; and may she obtain for the Church the freedom and joy to be able to respond everywhere, always youthful, holy and apostolic, to the expectations of men.

"Kindly come," said the Virgin to Bernadette.

This discreet invitation which does not compel, which is addressed to the heart, and requests with delicacy a free and generous response, the Mother of God puts forward again to her sons of France and of the world. Christians will not remain deaf to this appeal; they will go to Mary.



## The Atmosphere of the Gospel



*The same Savior  
passes by at  
Lourdes  
in the Eucharist  
and works with the  
same tenderness.*



Excerpts from: *Apparitions of Our Lady,  
Their Place in the Life of the Church*  
by: Louis Lochet

God's presence is revealed by His acts which are themselves mirrored in events. God's actions are thus to be seen in the very substance of history and every aspect of our lives. Normally hidden, they are here made apparent and can be verified by the senses.

But these actions have a meaning. They are intended to make us understand something. With admirable consistency, God repeats in different ways what He is and what He wishes. His actions reveal His heart and show His plans for the world. He made His prom-

ises known once more through events and with each repetition the heart is filled and the soul rejoices. Who is it then? Coming across the centuries we see the one who cures and pardons. The signs that God gives us are miracles of deliverance, of liberation, of healing and of calm for troubled hearts. From this point of view there is a continuity and a marvellous flowering of the Old Testament in the New. God announces, through His prophets, the pouring out of His goodness and Jesus knows that He is Himself



fulfilling these promises, but the miracles He performs are as yet only the dawn of the new dispensation, a foretaste of the final cures, the ultimate liberation and the perfect resurrection that He will effect at His second coming.

To understand the miracles of Lourdes and Fatima and the atmosphere of one of the great pilgrimages, we must grasp the way in which they continue the Gospel miracles and are, as it were, illuminated by them. Jean Guitten has put the point clearly: "There is a connection, apparent to everybody, between what is experienced at Lourdes and what is described in the Gospels." Lourdes brings the Gospel within our reach and this gives the places of pilgrimage an inexhaustible attraction.

It would be impossible to list all the points in common. The same Saviour passes by at Lourdes in the Eucharist and works with the same tenderness. The miracles are similar ones of kindness, reaching out to all forms of suffering and all types of people, reaching souls through bodies, imparting eternal life with physical life,

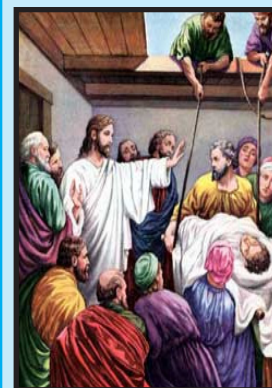
and giving the light of the faith when they give light to the eyes.

At Lourdes, as in the Gospel, the ordinary people are to the front. God speaks to the humble and works for His people. There, acclaiming the Saviour, are the ordinary folk and the poor. The Gospel is directed to them and they feel at home. The sick and the poor are evangelized and made joyful.

On the pilgrimage, we meet the lowly and the humble, often the poorest and most despised, but at the same time, the purest and the meekest who are granted the privilege of seeing. We are reminded of the words of Our Lord in the Gospel:

*"Confiteor tibi Pater quia abscondisti haec a sapientibus et prudentibus et revelasti ea parvulis"* -- "I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them to little ones."

At Lourdes, too, we find the delicacy, mercy, comprehension and welcome for sinners that constitute the very climate of the Gospel. Sinners flock there like the



*It is the same Christ, the Rock of Salvation, Who performs the miracles at each apparition. God sends His Mother with a message, and seals it with heavens proof... miracles.*



*Lourdes reflects the Gospels:  
The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean.*

thirsty to a spring. The miracles whereby bodies are cured are merely signs, surface agitation, to show the wonders that are taking place in the souls. It would be hard to find a more suitable text to describe what happens at Lourdes than the one, applied by Our Lord to Himself, in which Isaiah announced the time of the Messiah: "The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, to the

poor the Gospel is preached. And blessed is he whosoever shall not be scandalized in Me."

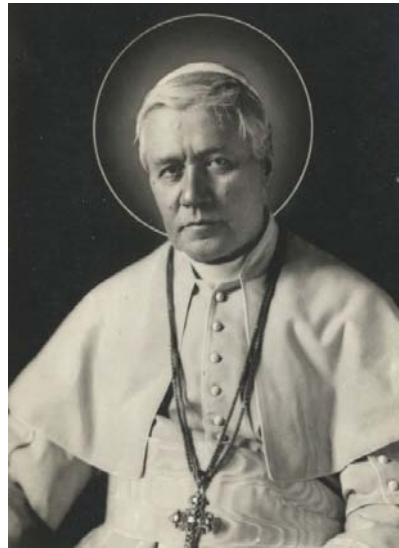
The end of the quotation retains all its force because these events have caused the same disturbance and division, the same conflicts as in the Gospel. The lights by which some see, blinds others. It is the same Christ who is the rock of salvation and the stumbling block, who uncovers the secrets of the heart.

## Apparitions At Lourdes

From the Apostolic Letter  
of  
Pope St. Pius X  
*Summa Deus hominum,*  
November 27, 1907

Moved by unequaled pity for mankind, God never ceases to work miracles by which He confirms the truth of religion and quickens the courage of the faithful, grants them relief and heals the infirmities of their bodies. However, not to the powerful of this earth, who proud of their riches, of their human learning, and of their public offices, often despise the faith and attack it with all their might, does Our Lord reveal His mysteries; but rather to His dutiful children and not seldom to the little ones.

This, for example, He has done at Lourdes in France, where fifty years ago Divine Mercy manifested itself visibly in the person of the Virgin Mary, the Mediatrix. The Mother of God, preserved from all stain of sin, appeared several times to a girl of humble station in the Grotto called Massabielle, situated near the town, and,



exhorting her as well as every one to practice penance, confirmed the heavenly vision with graces and wonders of every kind.

To perpetuate the memory of this wondrous happening, a temple sumptuously adorned, was erected and honored with the title and privileges of a Minor Basilica. To it, as well as to the Grotto, have streamed at all times and from every country, vast crowds imploring the aid of the Mother of Mercy and often obtaining answers to their prayers. At present that happy town possesses and with jealous care treasures that sanctuary, unique among the world's famous shrines, as a testimony to

Catholic truth.

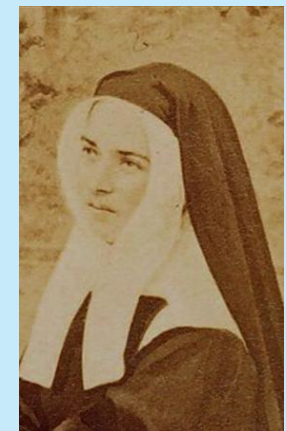
At the approach of the fiftieth anniversary of so stupendous a miracle, thanks to which devotion to the Virgin Mother of God, conceived without sin, and to her Holy Rosary, has increased immeasurably, with a view to making the

commemoration of that outstanding miracle more abundantly fruitful for the salvation of souls, We think We should open with the Church's spiritual treasures, of which despite Our unworthiness the Most High has seen fit to appoint Us dispenser.

Bernadette Soubirous,  
the privileged seer  
of  
Our Lady  
of  
Lourdes.

To Bernadette  
Our Lady  
said,  
*"I do not  
promise you  
happiness  
in this life,  
but only  
in the next."*

Penance was  
her message,  
and it was  
carried out  
by this  
willing  
victim.





*Shrine of Lourdes  
Chosen by  
Pope Pius X  
for  
Catholic Congress in  
Honor of  
The Holy Eucharist*

*Taken from letter:  
Ex omnibus locis  
to Cardinal Pignatelli,  
July 12, 1914*



Among the various places which have been so far chosen for the annual Catholic Congresses in honor of the Holy Eucharist, none seems more suitable than that chosen for the coming Congress -- the Shrine of Lourdes. This sanctuary the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God has recently chosen, so to speak, as the seat of her wide-spread bounty.

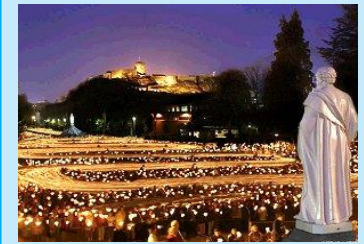
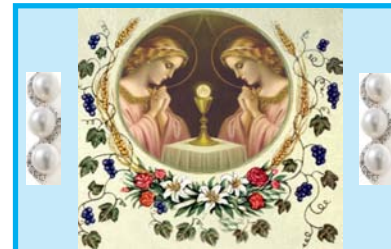
From the beginning of Christianity the Church has experienced the continuous help of the Mother of God, help which has varied, it is true, according to changing times, but which has ever

been fitting and gracious. Never did Mary wrench from her motherly heart that affection with which to her dying breath she so carefully formed the Spouse, which her Son had recently redeemed by His Precious Blood.

One might say that Mary's only occupation was to take care of the Christian people, -- whose condition on many occasions seemed to be desperate -- above all of attracting all souls to love and seek God. This was shown with extraordinary evidence at the Grotto of Massabielle. There, moved with com

passion toward that human society which broke the bonds of divine laws and consequently precipitated its own ruin, Mary appeared and invited men to penance and by the numerous miracles of bodily healing opened the way to the healing of souls.

Then, as if she had finished her own part, she shows to the wavering men of this century, the heavenly Doctor in person, the only One who can free this world from all the ills that torment it. It is worthy of note that in this place of devotion to the Mother of God, a singular and ardent devotion to Jesus Christ has sprung up. Even the miraculous healings which at first took place before the statue of the Virgin, now take place more frequently during the procession of the Blessed Sacrament.



*Too much stress  
cannot be laid  
on the  
importance of the  
Eucharistic life  
wherever Our Lady  
has appeared.  
There is not a  
pilgrimage, a  
ceremony, a day  
without some  
Eucharistic celebration,  
a procession of the  
Blessed Sacrament  
and the worship and  
offering of the  
Eucharistic Christ.*



*Pope Pius XII Makes  
Lourdes, Part of the Instructions  
for the  
Program of the Marian Year, 1954*

*But where, as is the case in almost all dioceses, there exists a church in which the Virgin mother of God is venerated with more intense devotion, here on stated days let pilgrims gather in great numbers and publicly, and in the open, give glorious expression to their common faith and to their common love toward the Virgin Most Holy.*

*We have no doubt that this will be done in an especial manner at the grotto of Lourdes, where there is such ardent devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mother conceived without stain of sin.*