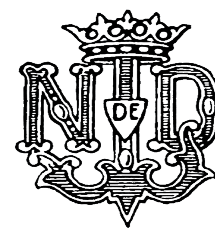




Saint Joseph NEWS LETTER



N°4 – January 2020

HAPPY NEWS YEAR IN SERVICE 2020

LOURDES 2020

"I am the Immaculate Conception. "
This is the pastoral theme of this year
2020 in Lourdes.

On the morning of the 25 March, still in the middle of the night, Bernadette woke up 2 times. The second time she tells her parents. "I have to go to the grotto and quickly"! When she arrives the superintendent is already there and the lady also. Bernadette recites her rosary and at the end The Lady signals her to come closer. Bernadette feels it is the right moment to ask her the question she's had in her mind for 3 weeks. She said to the lady "Miss, would you be so kind as to tell me who you are, please?" The Lady does not answer immediately but always smiles at her, Bernadette repeats her question. The fourth time, the lady no longer laughs. She passes her rosary to the right arm. Her clasped hands are spread out and extended towards the ground. With the same movement, she now joins her hands at breast height, lifts her eyes to heaven and says *"Que soy era Immaculada Councepciou "*. Bernadette immediately put her candle, which she held in her hand, on the ground. Now that she knows the name, she must go quickly and tell the priest. But how do you remember these unknown and

« Je suis l'Immaculée Conception. »

difficult words? She repeats them all the way so as not to forget them. In Lourdes, the Lady came to confirm the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception proclaimed by Pope Pius IX on December 8, 1854, 4 years earlier.

"The Blessed Virgin Mary was at the first instant of her conception, by the singular grace and favour of almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ Saviour of the human race, preserved intact from all defilement of original sin.

In Lourdes it is a question of Marie telling us who she is, revealing the secret of her heart. It is 25 March, nine months before Christmas, the day of the Annunciation, when the conception of Jesus is celebrated. Mary thus identifies her whole being with her mission to conceive for the world a little child barely formed in her womb, the Son of God. If she herself is conceived without sin it is not so that we stop there and that we just admire her, it is so that we follow her "yes", and her welcome of the gift from God "I am " she tells us entirely

caught up in this madness of love that drives God to give us his son.

From the Holy Spirit to the Virgin Mary

Maximilien Kolbe is the theologian who, more than any other, tried to understand the meaning of the name that Mary shared with Bernadette *"I am the Immaculate Conception."* He is convinced that Mary is our best educator in the Christian faith and to our knowledge of her Son Jesus. Like Bernadette before him the parish priest of Lourdes, wonders "Who are you, O Immaculate Conception" He directs this reflection towards the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the one who covered Mary with his shadow so that this Incarnation could occur. Before that and from the first moment, he is the one who forms in Mary an acceptance and availability. He is the One who accompanies Jesus on his way through life, on his way of the cross, on his way of glory since the Spirit is the Spirit of life and resurrection.

"And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit who dwells in you." Romans 8,11.

If Mary can be called the Immaculate Conception, it is Father Kolbe says, because of her close union with the Holy Spirit. She is in humanity the perfect image of what the Holy Spirit is in the divine sphere. The word Immaculate expresses the fact that Mary was not affected by original sin. But the word applied to Mary goes further. Since she is the Mother of God, Mary has something divine.

In the grotto of Massabielle, before revealing her name, Mary guided Bernadette to a source. This

source is not Christ but the source of living water !!!! To Mary more than to any other creature applies the word of Saint Paul: **“Blessed be the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ... who has blessed us in Christ, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.”** Ephesians 1,3-4.

For any pilgrim to discover the Immaculate Conception is to rediscover their first innocence beyond their sin, to experience the

gratuitousness of the gift, the experience of the possible truth in our lives. When we sit in front of the Grotto we contemplate the one who is our mother, who gave us her name and a mission: the Message of Lourdes to transmit to the world.

Bernard GLADIN

Responsable du Service St Joseph

With the kind complicity of Sister Bernadette MORIAU, author of the original text.

www.hospitaliers.it



July 2019, having just returned from my service in Lourdes, it is always a joy to remember the strong moments spent in silence in front of the Grotto with our Heavenly Mother and the joy of finding the Hospitaliers friends always at the same period. Each

year, they are different encounters, different friends, different testimonies.

Unfortunately, each passing year we regretfully lose one friend or another, for different reasons.

My service in the Hospitalite is a service turned towards others, where we must listen to everyone with love while trying to give a service adapted to each, according to their personality and their capabilities. But at the same time there is so much to know and to discover, particularly about the newcomers young and old. 5 years ago this motivated me come up with the idea of opening a website, www.hospitaliers.it and because the progress of technology advances, why not also open a Facebook site. This provides a link between all the Italian volunteers in Lourdes.

It is not enough just to see each other once every year, but we can stay in constant contact, to write

to each other, to exchange opinions (and sometimes controversy), which also serves to build something positive. Well, the website to date has been visited by no less than 92,000 people from Italy and abroad, while the Facebook site is much more visited, and there are registered around 3,100 volunteers from Lourdes. It is not easy to manage the site because it is updated almost every week, and sometimes every day. You may have been wondering who set this up, sometimes I wonder too, but it is surely a joy to be part of this magnificent group. We exchange salutations all year long, feeling all year that we are able to keep the hospitalier spirit, which we live by and to be united together in prayer.

To re-encounter God and hear his word we must serve with humility whether it is in the service of the sick or whether it is between us.

I hope that we can all meet each other again this year and that we can pray together with our Heavenly Mother. Fraternally.

Giorgio BUSSI, Accueil Hospitaliers

Administrateur site internet www.hospitaliers.it et site Facebook.

RELIQUES ET RELIQUAIRES

In 2019, we talked a lot about the Relics of Saint Bernadette. Many of us have had the privilege of carrying the relics or watching over them at the Grotto. Many questions have been raised:

- What is the meaning of the veneration of relics?
- What are the relics of Saint Bernadette?
- Why these different reliquaries?

Relic from Latin reliquiae = remains: **"It is what remains of a person honoured as a saint (bodily elements or objects that belonged to the person). The worship given to relics, which is addressed to the saints is a worship of respect and not of worship, which is reserved for God alone."** (Bishops conference of France).

Prayer around relics has meaning only in order to feel closer to the one we invoke, to soak up their example, to solicit their intercession, and to open our hearts more to love of God and others, as the saints knew how to do. Besides, the reliquary is neither a monstrance nor a tabernacle.

There are several levels of relics. In Lourdes there are only important relics of Bernadette, *ex carne* or *ex ossibus* which correspond to fragments of the body, no matter the volume, or the exact nature, it is the proximity to Saint Bernadette that matters.

Bernadette Soubirous died on Easter Wednesday, 16 April, 1879 at 3.30 p.m. She was buried in a chapel dedicated to Saint Joseph in the enclosure of the Motherhouse in Nevers. She was exhumed three times:

- in 1909 for the opening of the beatification process: remarkable state of conservation of the body.

- in 1919 recognition of the body before beatification.

- in April 1925 "for the recognition of the body and the taking of relics which were to be sent to Rome and Lourdes or kept in religious convents of the Sisters of Charity of Nevers".

"Intact body, complete skeleton, atrophied but well preserved muscles, parchment skin ..." (reports of forensic pathologists).

Bernadette was beatified on June 14, 1925 and canonized on December 8, 1933. (Note that during the war during the bombing of Nevers, the tomb was preserved and there was no need to re-open this tomb until 1954 to remove the dust).



THE RELIQUARIES

The first reliquary acquired in Lourdes is a remarkable piece of gold work, the work of the ARMAND-CALLIAT-CATELANT silversmiths of Lyon. It is a reliquary in vermeil and cloisonné enamels, representing a chapel with neo-Gothic vaults of richly carved style adorned with carnelian and set with

semi-precious stones, flanked by statuettes of ivory: The Virgin, Saint Bernadette, Saint Pierre and Saint Paul. All this makes it a very precious and very fragile object not well suited to transport, changes in temperature, humidity, vibrations, etc. It contains a reliquary box in partitioned enamels which itself protects the *ex ossibus* fragment.

Traditionally this reliquary only left the crypt for the parish procession; very exceptionally it was sent to Italy.

Since 2016, a pastoral decision was made to allow the relics of Saint Bernadette make processions or pilgrimages elsewhere, and for this it was necessary to acquire a reliquary specific to the type of journey it would make but also allowing a part of Bernadette to remain in Lourdes. In 2018 Father Cables, after having received the opinion of the chaplains, established a specification and looked to contract a goldsmith; it was the Spanish company GRANDA which produced this unique piece of gold work for the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes.



The work is in classic form with elements evoking the Sanctuary such as the Gothic bell tower. The piece is coated with a gold. The enamel decorations on the lateral faces: "Our Lady of Lourdes and an Apparition" are inspired by the stained glass windows of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception. The colour of the enamels and the pillars evokes the

internationality of Lourdes. On the basis of the inscriptions chosen by the Rector, Father Cables:

"Que soy era Immaculada Councepciou".
 "Salus Infirmorum".
 "Refugium peccatorum".
 "Il suffit d'aimer."

It contains a small reliquary which has the form of a monstrance in which is sealed an ex-carne relic; this reliquary was donated by the Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception. This reliquary "replaces" another one, which is travelling and is a small reliquary belonging to the Community of the Sisters of Nevers of Lourdes, it also contains an *ex-carne* relic.



Bernard GLADIN,
with the kind collaboration of Pascale LEROY-CASTILLO
Head of Archives and Heritage Diocese of Tarbes and Lourdes

FICHE TECHNIQUE

Reliquaire ancien :

Dimensions :

Chasse-reliquaire : H : 65cm L : 90 cm P : 45 cm

Coffret scellé : H : 10cm L : 20cm P : 10 cm.

Poids : seul : 54 kg
 + 10kg fleurs
 + brancard

Total : **77.6 kg**

Nouveau Reliquaire :

Dimensions :

H : 75.5 cm L : 32.5 cm P : 32.5 cm.

Poids : reliquaire + cloche + socle : 60 kg.
 + 10 kg de fleurs.
 + 11 Kg brancard.

Total : **81kg**

2020 - Service Saint Joseph

What will Service Saint-Joseph be doing in 2020?

Surely the continuation of what we undertook in 2019: the welcome, always the best, more personalized and more "Christian" welcome. This welcome is our Mission; we owe it to all the pilgrims at the airport, at the SNCF train station, at the Notre-Dame and Saint Frai the Accueils, but also at the Ceremonies, at the Grotto, the Plateau Piscine and in the baths. **We must always think of others**, the one who comes, who comes to look for "something" in Lourdes. This "something" we cannot always give it a priori but we can and we must help them seek and perhaps to find.

We must also think about welcoming and helping our brothers and sisters hospitaliers(eres) and especially the "stagiaires" and first of all the newcomers, those who discover Lourdes, the Message of Lourdes, the grotto but also the Hospitalite. For this we will use systematically the new AccHosp software, developed by Giovanni MASI which has been used throughout 2019 and develop it for the Reception desk for stagiaires, under the leadership of Bruno VERMESSE.

We will have to focus on being present, available and open to welcome these "newcomers", they are our future in the Hospitalite; they are the ones who will take over and keep the Mission going.

We also have to make room for our hospitaliers in our services. No one owns his post, his office; the Mission is collective and everyone must be able to participate in it by taking responsibility. Those who are experienced hospitaliers and responsables need to understand how and when to let go and to promote, "younger" people, we also need to understand how to support them.

New orders will be given to us by the Sanctuary and the new Rector Mgr RIBADEAU-DUMAS; we will have to read these instructions carefully when starting service, make sure we respect and apply them; what we did 20 or 25 years ago, even 10 years ago, is obsolete and we have to constantly question ourselves about how we serve.

As for the Bretelles (what a success !!!!) the problem is recurrent, they are not systematically returned at the end of service. This lack of rigor is penalizing all stagiaires and hospitaliers because the Bretelles belong to the Hospitalite family and not to each of us individually. It is unfortunate, that some people have decided to keep Bretelles that belong to the community at the end of their service. The Council, which will meet in February, will have to make more stringent provisions concerning the Bretelles (a deposit, delivery by the service advisor, return to service of dossard, etc.). The current arrangements can no longer continue and will have to be improved; so please don't be surprised to see a change in how the Bretelles are issued from this season.

Let us be proud and happy to serve in this Hospitalite which is so dear to us.

Happy new year 2020, in service and under the watchful eye of the Lady who brought us all to Lourdes.

Bernard GLADIN

Responsable du Service Saint Joseph

Hospitalité Notre Dame de Lourdes - Accueil Jean Paul II – BP 197 - 65106 Lourdes Cedex – France

Service Saint Joseph :tél. (33) (0)5 62 42 80 73 - e-mail : st-joseph1@wanadoo.fr ou resp-st-joseph@wanadoo.fr

Président de l'HNLD : Daniel PEZET Vice-Président : Responsable du Service Saint Joseph : Bernard GLADIN France. Conseillers du Service Saint Joseph :Giacomo BARONE It - Gerard BENNETT Ir. - Michel CHATAGNON Fr.- Henri DAUSSE Fr- Vincent FOSSE Fr- Dominique FRECHES Aus - Philippe FROMENTIN Fr. –. Fc Javier GAMBUS FREIXA Esp - Alexandre GIAMPICCOLO Fr.- Juan Carlos GONZALEZ GARCIA Esp - Antonio MATURO It - Fabien METAIS Fr. - Patrick MONNET Fr.- Emmanuel RION Fr.- Patrice de la RUPELLE Fr..
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