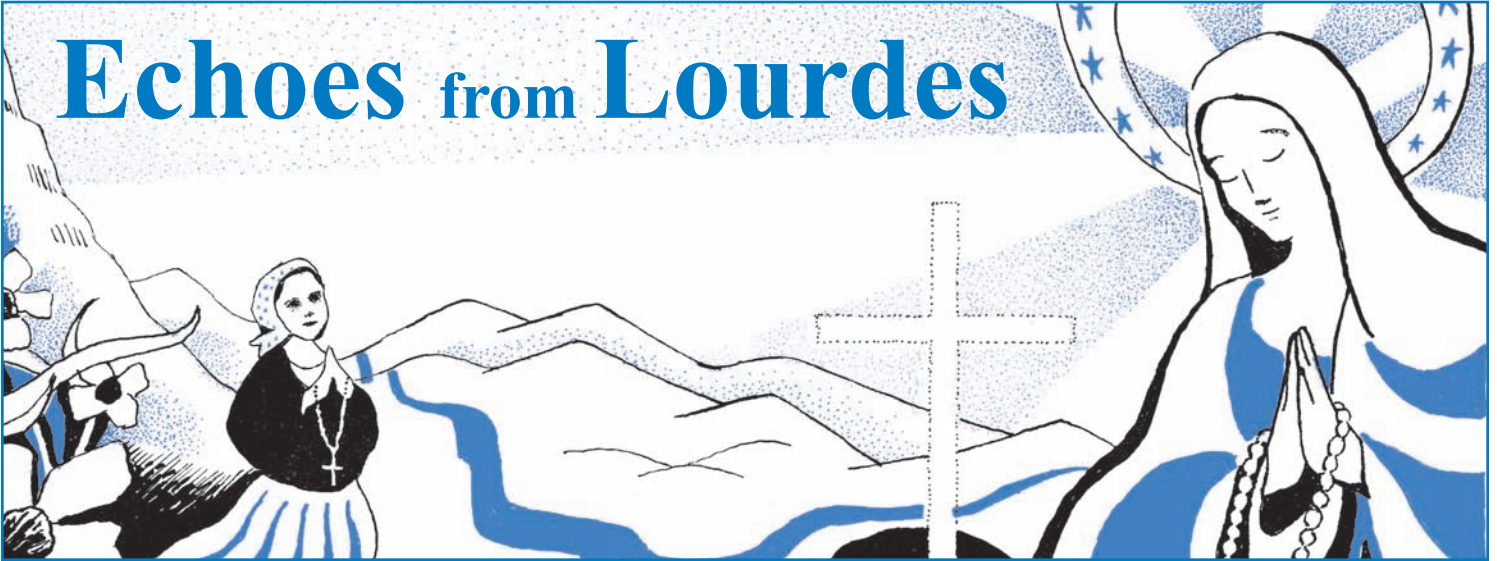


Echoes from Lourdes



Where Heaven Came Down to Earth

by Fr. Roland Lacasse, s.m.



Dorothy Kirby and Fr. Lacasse

Twenty years ago, my mother and I went to Lourdes on a tour of France and Italy. This year, I went back to Lourdes as a pilgrim, serving as Chaplain for the Lourdes Center's May pilgrimage. As a tourist, I was curious, but as a pilgrim I was devout. To think that I was at a place where Heaven came down to earth, as happened at Fatima and Guadalupe, was a moving experience.

The first full day we were at Lourdes we took part in the Night Procession, along with 12,000 other people, most of whom carried lit candles as they recited the Rosary. Many of these people were part of a group from various countries of the world, and they would march in procession following a banner that represented their particular county or region. They

also sang a great deal, expressing their faith in Mary's powerful intercession. Here at Lourdes, faith was alive and well. People in different parts of the world might well seem to be pagan, but at Lourdes our faith was tangible. It made one realize how universal our faith was, and how strong it was. We were proud to be Catholics, proud of our devotion to Mary, proud of the Saints, proud of St. Bernadette, a young girl whose sanctity led to her becoming a canonized Saint at the age of thirty-five.

Then there was the visit we made to the abandoned jail where Bernadette and her family were forced to take refuge when her father went bankrupt. How a whole family could live in a tiny room was hard to imagine. The poverty of this place of shelter took your breath away. Yet, God was there in their midst.

Then there was the "International Mass" at the underground basilica of St. Pius X. Here, over 20,000 people gathered, along with 200 priests from all over the world. The Bishop of the Netherlands presided at the raised altar in the center of the Church. As I observed this scene I could not help think of the millions

of people who would be assembled before the "Lamb of God," at the end of the world.

Then I went to the grotto where Mary appeared to Bernadette, no less than eighteen times within about four months. I prayed at the very spot that Bernadette knelt and prayed during the apparitions. As I said my Rosary audibly in French I was soon joined by someone who answered each of the five decades of the Rosary, someone I had never met.

Mary came down from Heaven to remind us to pray for sinners and to encourage us, in this "valley of tears" we are living in.

Lourdes has had sixty-six documented cures since 1858, physical cures which defied the medical world. As you look around Lourdes, it's obvious that the sick have a special place there. If anyone has a right to be there, it is those who are sick, crippled or lame. But Lourdes does more than welcome the sick. It welcomes everyone, and invites everyone to look beyond the material world to another world of the spirit. That's the world that awaits us all, and Mary wants us never to forget it.

Travel Light

by Fr. Leo Bourdeau, S.M.

God the Father chose and prepared Mary to be the mother of His Divine Son. So He sends an angel to ask if she accepts. She was surprised, even puzzled, but being full of grace, faith and love, she answers: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to Your word." Throughout her life on earth, she learned from the past. She was totally immersed in the present, in work, in prayer and in loving service to others. She entrusted the future to the Divine Providence of God. Thereby she found the Peace that only God can give. She learned how to "TRAVEL LIGHT." She will help us do the same.

Many people carry the unpleasant burden of the past anger over past persons or events, grudges over past hurts, frustration over past failures, pain over past injustices. We must learn from the past, but we must not live in the past. We must instead fulfill our Gospel duty of forgiving others if we hope to be forgiven. This will heal us of hurt pride, of hurt feelings, of hurt reputation. We can TRAVEL LIGHT.

The heaviest burden anyone can carry in life is remorse and sin. Many people are ill at ease when they see a cemetery, meet a funeral cortege or hear an emergency ambulance siren, for they know they are not ready to meet God. People in mortal sin have the obligation of weekend Mass, but they can not receive Communion. However, repentance and God's merciful forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation will unlock the handcuffs of remorse and the heavy chains of guilt. That will make us free to TRAVEL LIGHT.

Others are carrying a worry-filled long list of unanswered questions. Why this illness, why the sudden death of a parent, a spouse or a child, why this accident, why this broken friendship or shattered marriage? With each re-asking of the questions, the burden becomes heavier. Or what will happen next month or next year? What if I undergo surgery? What if I become blind, or orphaned, or widowed? These people burden themselves with crosses that will never be put on their shoulders. Both groups must be realistic. We are all imperfect and we live in the midst of imperfect people. And because of our limited knowledge, there are some things we shall never fully understand. We must trust the Wisdom of God and accept to live with some mystery about ourselves, about others, even about God. We must also increase our trust in God's Divine Presence. God will love us as much next year as He does this year, and as much as He loved us on the Cross. We have cost Him too much for Him to neglect or forget us. We can rid ourselves of many fears. Then we will TRAVEL LIGHT.

Still others are burdened with handicaps, illness, advanced age or loneliness. They carry the burden of not being appreciated or understood by those around them or dear to them, of being falsely accused or rashly judged, of waiting in vain for the friendly knock at the door, the ring of the telephone, the visit of a relative. To lighten this burden, we must be convinced that when we are in the state of grace, we are never alone. And if God is with us, who can be against us? We must remember that the real measure of our greatness or importance is not health, not riches, not popularity, not financial

success, not social standing, not academic degrees. It is love of God and love of one another. We are never too young or too old to love, never too well or too weak to love, never too poor or too rich to love, never too isolated or in too great a crowd to love. So let us discard these burdens and false values. Let us live a life of staunch faith and generous love then we can TRAVEL LIGHT.

These are some of the ways of TRAVELING LIGHT, as we journey to Heaven where there will be no more burdens.

Available from the Lourdes Center

Crystal Rosaries
(with water from Lourdes)
(rose, blue, clear
black).....\$6.85

Brown or Green
Scapulars.....2.00

O.L. Lourdes or
St. Bernadette pins.....3.50

Lourdes Grotto medal
and chain.....3.00

"Bernadette"
by Fr. John Lynch, SM.....2.00

"Lourdes and Our Lady" by
Rev. John W. Lynch, S.M...\$2.00

"Joseph The Carpenter"
by G. Caron.....3.00

**"Come We Could Be
Children Together"**
by G. Caron.....3.00

Readers Write:

PA: We received a miracle for my grand niece, Katie, aged seventeen who was in an automobile accident in January. She was driving and her car was hit by a car driven by another girl, also age seventeen. The driver's seat was pushed over to the passenger side of the car. She had a lacerated spleen, an embolism in the spleen, and a concussion. She was on oxygen and the medical personnel thought she would die. A CAT scan was conducted and they waited 48 hours before calling the family. During that time we sent prayer intentions for Katie to the Lourdes Center, our Parish and other Catholic centers. The CAT scan results showed nothing wrong at all. Katie is now back in school and will graduate this spring. Thank you for your wonderful prayers. **Sr. A.M.H.**

WI: Please accept the enclosed gift in appreciation for favors and prayers granted through Our Lady of Lourdes. I was diagnosed with uterus cancer in November and had surgery in December. Follow up tests revealed that it was all clear and my blood platelets are back to normal. I did not need any radiation and chemotherapy and so I have been truly blessed. I enjoy receiving the "Echoes from Lourdes." **C.R.**

OH: I went for a mammogram in December, 2003, and received a letter and follow up phone call asking me to return for additional testing. I made an appointment but had to cancel due to bad weather, and out of concern they continued to call me to conduct further testing. After the second test the mammogram revealed cancer in two places on my right breast, and I would

need to have surgery. While waiting for the surgery, I used the Lourdes Water everyday on both breasts and prayed to Our Blessed Mother, whatever happens to give me the strength to endure. At an appointment with the doctor to plan the surgery, I had more film taken for a final observation before talking with the doctor. After a prolonged period of time the nurse and the doctor came in with the films, and I was told they did not know what happened but the cancer had vanished. He said the spots were there but now gone. I smiled and began thanking Our Blessed Mother. I feel so blessed and happy to finally share with you at the Lourdes Center. I pray that I shall never be without Lourdes Water, and freely share the water with friends who are not Catholic. I share with them my story and tell them miracles are granted as a result of our faith and prayers. **E.D.**

OR: Enclosed is a gift in thanksgiving to Our Lady of Lourdes for helping my daughter find a new job, and getting better from her depression. The Lourdes Water helps my Mom's (she is 80 years old) eyes and her arthritis. She puts it in her eyes and also drinks the water. Thank you and God Bless you! **B.P.**

WI: My mother, Erna, died March 18, 2005, at the age of 103 and 5 months! She was born on Halloween, October 31, 1901. She was devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary and especially to Our Lady of Lourdes. My brother Mark was born on February 11th! Erna was an avid user of Lourdes Water for at least 80 years, a bottle of Lourdes Water was always on her person. Erna shared the Novena and the Lourdes

Water with many people who were in need of Our Lady's help. Erna has passed this devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes to her family. Erna was also a promoter of the Miraculous Medal. Erna had many health problems during her life: two hip replacements, a pelvic fracture, wrist fracture, a pacemaker, Melanoma on her face, two heart attacks and congestive heart failure. Erna always attributed her recoveries to Our Lady of Lourdes! My husband Ray and I also use Lourdes Water. Ray's glaucoma is under control and also his prostate problems. I had a mastectomy in 1989 and was cancer free until 2001. I had surgery and with Our Lady's help have been cancer free! We are so thankful to the Good Lord and to Our Blessed Mother. Thank you. **M.H.W.**

Affiliations – for Living

**Remembrance in 50 Masses
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(Please Print Clearly)

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Offering: 1 year \$2.00, 3 years \$5.00
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Address _____

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Lourdes Water...

**...is an expression
of my faith...
my trust in God's mercy.**

Offering to cover shipping & handling \$ _____

N.B. A donation of \$2.00 per bottle is suggested to cover our expenses. When the offering permits, we use Priority Mail. We will accept orders of 1-3-5-6-and 10 bottles. For multiples thereof and for unusual numbers requested, we reserve the right to send what is both just and feasible.

Please send _____ bottles of the water from the Shrine at Lourdes

Name (Please Print Clearly) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Does this person receive the "Echoes from Lourdes?" Yes No

If not, should we send the "Echoes?" Yes No

PLEASE ALLOW 3-6 WEEKS FOR DELIVERY

Our Deceased

CHESTER YATES, MO
 JENNY YATES, MO
 DONNA J. HAGGERTY, LA
 MARGARET CASEY, NY
 W. W. MC RAE, FL
 LUCILLE W. BUELL, FL
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Making a Will?

If you wish to remember us in your will, our legal title is *Marist Fathers of Boston, Lourdes Bureau*. It is a timeless gift that assures you will be part of the Lourdes Center mission for years to come. Please contact us for more information about remembering the Lourdes Center in your will or about other estate plans.

Together in our Prayers

Please remember my intentions on:

- June 9th:
Terminal Illness
- July 26th:
Saint Anne
- Thursday: Perpetual Novena
to Our Lady of Lourdes
- First Fridays: Cancer and
Life-threatening diseases
- At Daily Masses:
(Living and Deceased)

Intentions _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Please indicate here if offering is enclosed. Thank you. God Bless.

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Published monthly to promote devotion of Our Lady and interest in her shrine at Lourdes.

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