

echoes

FROM LOURDES

September - October, 2025
Vol. 17 No. 1

A PUBLICATION OF THE LOURDES CENTER ♦ MARIST FATHERS AND BROTHERS





FR. PHILIP PARENT, SM

THE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Fall greetings from the Lourdes Center in Boston! We pray for you all and appreciate your prayers and support for us and our ministry. There was some special news from Lourdes that was announced last April but that I learned of more recently. On April 16, the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes officially announced the latest Lourdes miracle as proclaimed by the bishop of the Diocese of Tursi-Lagonegro in Italy, Bishop Vincenzo Carmine Orofino. This is the 72nd miracle attributed to the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes since her appearance to Bernadette Soubirous in 1858. Antonietta Raco, age 67, was cured of a rare disease, primary lateral sclerosis (PLS), in 2009 during a pilgrimage to Lourdes sponsored by a Catholic organization in her diocese. Beginning in 2004, she began to experience severe migraines, fatigue, and abnormal bodily weakness, especially in her legs. Her condition grew worse for the next 2 years: She had greater difficulty walking and her bodily weakness spread, including to muscles in her throat that caused slurred speech. She was diagnosed with PLS in 2006. (Note: this disease is related to ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), often called “Lou Gehrig’s disease”. ALS is more severe, progresses more rapidly, and usually leads to death within 5 years. PLS is rarer, is less severe, progresses more slowly, and is not usually fatal.) Antonietta’s condition worsened in 2008, with severe muscle weakness in both her arms and legs. She went on a pilgrimage to Lourdes on July 30, 2009. The next day, she was brought to the baths by volunteers. As they prayed together, Antonietta said she heard a voice: “I heard a beautiful young female voice say three times: ‘Don’t be afraid!’” During her immersion, she sensed a sudden sharp pain in her legs, but afterwards, she felt an unusual sense of well-being and realized that she could walk again. She did not speak of this nor show signs of her healing until she returned home. She told her husband that something had happened to her in Lourdes. With that, she stood unaided for the first time in years. Overcome with emotion, the couple embraced and cried together. After speaking to a local priest, Antonietta had a series of check-ups with several doctors that showed that the symptoms she had been experiencing had disappeared. She returned to Lourdes in 2010 to meet with doctors at the Office of Medical Observations there. A file was opened for her and over the next few years, meetings of the doctors and other experts in that office were held to review her case. Their final meeting was in 2017. Other consultations and medical observations followed. In November, 2024, the Lourdes Medical Office announced that there was no medical explanation for the unexpected, unexplained, complete, and lasting cure that Antonietta had experienced. Her bishop in Italy began his own investigation at that point and that process led to his official proclamation last April of the miraculous healing that she had experienced.

Antonietta returned to Lourdes in late July of this year. It was the 16th anniversary of the pilgrimage she first made to Lourdes. She was received as a special guest of the shrine in light of the announcement of the miracle she experienced, but she was there mainly to serve others. On the cover, she is pictured at a press conference in the white veil and uniform of the Hospitallers of Lourdes, a group of dedicated volunteer caregivers. She returns to Lourdes yearly to care for the sick and infirm who come seeking a cure as she had done in 2009. She is there to assist those pilgrims with the same compassion that was once shown to her. We give thanks to the Lord for the miracle she experienced and we pray for the healing and well being of all those who ask our prayers for themselves or for others. May God bless you all.

Peace,

Fr. Philip Parent, SM

Director



FROM ST. BERNADETTE

“If one dream should fall and break into a thousand pieces, never be afraid to pick up one of those pieces and begin again. That’s the beauty of being alive We can always start all over again. Enjoy God’s amazing opportunities that He bestows on us. Have faith in Him always.”

AUTUMN PRAYER

*O God of Creation, you have blessed us with the changing of the seasons.
As we welcome the autumn months,
may the earlier setting of the sun
remind us to take time to rest.
May the changing colors of the leaves
remind us of the wonder of your creation.
May our breathing in the cooler air
remind us that it is you who give us the breath of life.
May the harvest from the fields remind us of the abundance we have been
given and the bounty we are to share with others.
May the dying of summer's spirit remind us of your great promise
that death is temporary and life is eternal.
We praise you for your goodness forever and ever.
This we pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.
- Author Unknown*

Readers Write

Dear Father Philip,

I am from a family who had a mother especially devoted to Our Lady. She taught us about Lourdes water many years ago. I knew of the Center long before I took my own daughter to Lourdes 10 years ago. The story that has been on my heart to share with you is of an exceptionally difficult time in our family two years ago. My nephew was in a car accident with his girlfriend. She passed away in the car and my nephew was hospitalized with a traumatic brain injury. I prayed as never before, fully believing that Our Lord would perfectly restore him. I prayed as St. Bernadette instructed – that is, for holiness instead of for healing – but yes, healing too, if it be God’s will. During this time, I reminded my brother (his father) of the Lourdes water that I had given him and ordered more from you to be sent to him. When I asked if he had received the additional bottles, he said yes, but that the original bottle that had only about a quarter inch of water in it ... it never ran out. He would bless his son each evening with the Lourdes water as he and his wife kept vigil every day. I prayed for St. Joseph and St. Michael to stand at the head of his bed and Our Lady to keep watch over him. I prayed that he could receive Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament every time I received at daily Mass. (I prayed that this was a permissible prayer!)

Ultimately, my nephew passed away. You have to know that when a parent loses a child, the suffering is so deep that the family loses the parent too; they are never the same. The night of Chandler Joseph’s funeral, my brother was sharing this story with other family members. I asked him if he knew what day it was. His look showed me he didn’t. The day was the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. While this was an incredibly painful way to receive a blessing, the blessings were there as was this beautiful consolation from Our Lady. More recently, my brother, very physically fit, suffered a heart attack. Please pray for his complete healing and that, once fully restored, he will respond to whatever God may be calling him to in this life. He is faithful and such a good father and man. Thank you, Father. Your work is such a blessing to all of us. We are forever grateful.

M. K. L., Texas



LOURDES PILGRIMAGES

We want to remind our readers that the Lourdes Center will not be sponsoring pilgrimages to Lourdes. For those who are interested in going on pilgrimage, we can provide the names of several travel agencies that are Catholic or who focus on Catholic pilgrimages. They sponsor pilgrimages to Lourdes or that include Lourdes in pilgrimages that visit more than one shrine. We can send you a list of these agencies by mail, by email if you reach us at www.lourdescenter.org, or by calling us Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm (ET) at (617) 536-2761.

MARIST GUIDANCE

Modelling the Suffering of Jesus

BY FR. FRANCIS A. GRISPINO, SM

There is a spiritual principle stating: Those who live a good Christian life and keep the commandments of God are able to mirror (even in a dim sort of way) the love and mercy of God toward sinners - even to the point of their avoiding punishment (Colossians 1, 24) and, with God's help, causing their conversion. This principle begins to emerge in the following biblical stories and then ends with a modern one.

In the striking dialogue between God and Abraham, we read how God is willing to forego the punishment of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah if a sufficient number of people in the cities were to be found innocent. Like two serious minded businessmen dueling toward an agreement, Abraham entreats God, if he be willing, to forgo the destruction of Sodom if 50 innocent people were to be found there. The Lord agrees. The haggling begins with 50 and ends with ten innocent people: "For the sake of those ten innocent people I will not destroy it." (Genesis 18, 16-33).

The "take-away" from this story demonstrates the spiritual principle: The innocent are able to affect a happy solution that leads to the safety of those



guilty from punishment. The good living few are able to stay the punishing hand of God from striking down the many sinners. The following story depicts one of Jacob's sons, the innocent one, saving the eleven guilty sons from punishment for their sin of betrayal.

Joseph And His Brothers

This story is about jealousy within the family. Eleven brothers despise their younger brother, Joseph, because he was so favored by their father, Jacob. Joseph is spared from a murderous death by having him sold off to a caravan of traders on route to Egypt. Jesus is mirrored in Joseph not only because he is betrayed for money – 20 pieces of silver for Joseph, 30 for Jesus – but also betrayed by his own. Joseph, the would-be slave, becomes,

by God's Providence, a friend of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

The first pivot from misfortune to his becoming second to the king was his interpretation of Pharaoh's dream. His true interpretation prevents a widening famine. His change from being a slave to having a princely position not only saves his family from starvation, but leads to forgiveness for the very ones who betrayed him.

The modelling of Jesus takes on a redemptive value over the selfishness of the many. Joseph reflects Jesus not only because, like Jesus, he was betrayed for pieces of silver, but because he becomes an agent of forgiveness for the sins of others through his suffering.

Continued on next page

MARIST GUIDANCE

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The Conversion of Dr. Felix Leseur

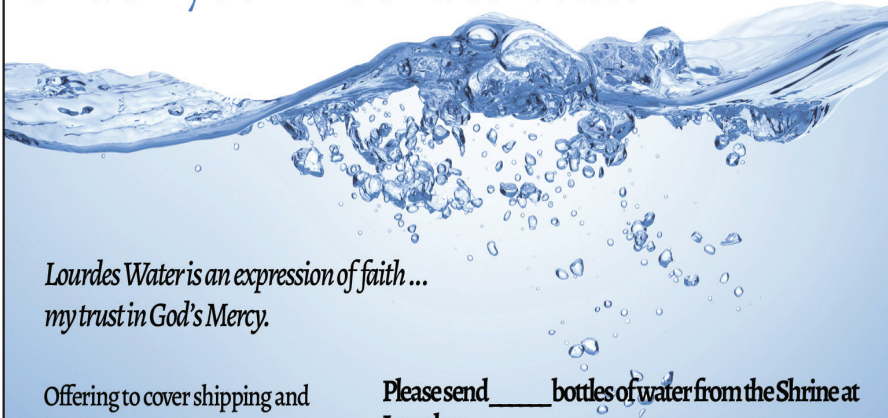
Bishop Sheen tells this story how as a young priest he attended a retreat at a Dominican Monastery in Belgium. The retreat master concluded his last presentation by speaking about a woman he had known. She was married to a man who was an atheist with an extra hatred for the Catholic Church. The woman confided to her husband on her death bed that she had been offering up to God her suffering over the past nine years for his conversion. The Dominican retreat master

revealed his true identity in his concluding words: The woman not only correctly predicted the conversion of her husband to the Catholic faith but also that he would become a Dominican priest!

Our stories demonstrate the preponderance of evil people and how the scale of justice leans heavily for them towards mercy because of the goodness of the few. Some, as in the last story, undergo extraordinary suffering and turn their suffering into redemptive acts in union with the sufferings of Jesus on the cross.

Those of us in the lower ranks might do well to take to heart the words of our Blessed Mother who in her appearances on earth encourages us with the words: "Penance, Penance, Penance."

Order your Lourdes Water



*Lourdes Water is an expression of faith ...
my trust in God's Mercy.*

Offering to cover shipping and handling \$ _____ N.B.

A donation of \$3.00 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 allow 3-6 weeks
for delivery*

Please send _____ bottles of water from the Shrine at Lourdes

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Requested by: _____

Does this person receive this newsletter? Yes No

If not, should we send Echoes from Lourdes to them?

Yes No

A Gift from You...

**Give someone you care about
a FREE SUBSCRIPTION to
Echoes from Lourdes!**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

USE SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

E-mail to: ourlady@lourdescenter.org

LOURDES CENTER

698 Beacon Street

Boston, MA 02215-2594

Our Deceased

We have been notified that the following friends of the Lourdes Center have passed away. Please join us in remembering them in your prayers.

PATRICIA KARWOWSKI, MI
 WILLIAM RACZKOWSKI, MA
 CATHERINE GRADY, NH
 ALBERTA GREER, PA
 JUDITH A. GROOVER, FL
 VELMA V. BEDISON, CA
 RITA B. KERN, NC
 GEORGE ENGLISH, FL
 LORRAINE ENGLISH, FL
 HELEN PAJESTKA, TX
 SR. MARY SYLVIA, MN
 MARIE FELIO, OK
 ELIZABETH OWENS, MA
 IRIS RUIZ, CA
 MATILDA M. ROSAS, VT
 ELIZABETH VRANA, PA
 VELMA V. BEDISON, CA
 GEORGE PESTER, KS
 VERONICA KRZYMALSKI, NJ
 GERTRUDE GARILANO, NJ
 BELEN DELA PENA, MD
 ALEX S. RODRIGUEZ, NM
 MARY ELLEN MORELLI, FL
 RICHARD HEYD, IL

CATHERINE TOLLEY, NV
 JOAN SPEARMAN, OK
 VIOLET HAYS, MT
 RITA SAWICKI, MA
 AUGUSTINE M. MOORE, LA
 REE MOMB, VA
 J. SHERIDAN, NJ
 ALBERT & THOMASSINE CIPAS, NJ
 CAROL P. PAVUR, TN
 PAM LUNDIN, PA
 RITA IAMELE, MA
 SANDRA CLARKE, FL
 AGNES B. MCDERMOTT, CA
 MARJORIE A. MUZYKA, TX



Purgatorials for the Deceased

Name of Deceased _____

Please send Purgatorial to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Requested by: _____

Suggested offering: \$20.00 perpetual.

Our Lady's Purgatorial Society

Each year, your enrolled deceased and loved ones are remembered during the 365 daily Masses celebrated by the Marist Fathers. An attractive certificate framed in a blue folder with a colorful picture of Our Lady is sent to the donor or recipient.

Please mail responses to: Lourdes Center, 698 Beacon St. Boston, MA 02215-2594

Our Gift Center



The following gift items are available for order from the Marist Lourdes Center in Boston.

- OUR LADY OF LOURDES MEDAL IN GROTTTO.....\$5.00
- BROWN SCAPULAR.....\$3.00
- OUR GIFT FROM MARY SCAPULAR BOOKLET.....\$3.00
- BROWN SCAPULAR BOOKLET AND BROWN.....\$5.00
SCAPULAR
- GREEN SCAPULAR.....\$2.00
- BOOKLET: "LOURDES AND OUR LADY".....\$4.00
BY FR. JOHN LYNCH, S.M.

Please send your order with payment to:
 698 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02215-2594

Affiliations

Remembrance in 50 Masses yearly.

Person to be Affiliated:

Requested by:

Offering

1 year: \$2.00; 3 years: \$5.00; Lifetime: \$10.00

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

On Friday, September 12 and Friday, September 26
and Friday, October 10 and Friday, October 24,
the Marists of the Lourdes Center will be praying for you.

You can count on it. On the second and the fourth Friday of every month, we hold a prayer day when we offer special prayers and celebrate a Mass at our chapel for our extended Lourdes family.

Please send us your intentions: _____

Please direct your intentions, and any offering you'd like to send, to:
Lourdes Center, 698 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02215-2594

Published bi-monthly to promote devotion
to Our Lady and interest in her shrine at
Lourdes.
Director: Rev. Philip Parent, SM
Printed with Eccelesiastical Approval

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698 Beacon Street
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