

echoes

FROM LOURDES

September-October, 2020
Vol. 12 No. 1

A PUBLICATION OF THE LOURDES CENTER ♦ MARIST FATHERS AND BROTHERS



“We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God...”



FR. GEORGE SZAL, S.M.

THE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

"The Almighty has done great things for me...He has mercy on those who fear Him in every generation"

The story of Lourdes is intimately connected with the conversion of radical Islamicists in the 8th century, and even further back to a miraculous appearance of the Blessed Virgin at Le Puy, France in the 4th century. Mary has been the help of Christians ever since she and St. Joseph escaped the wicked King Herod from the beginning of Jesus' birth. She was protecting and supporting the Church then and is protecting us now.

In the time of St. Bernadette (1844-1879) the grotto of the apparitions, Massabielle ("Old Rock"), was considered to be a real dump, a place for swineherds to keep their pigs in bad weather. However, one thousand years earlier it was the name of the impregnable fortress that still stands about 3,000 feet above the town of Lourdes in southernmost France. In the year 778 AD it had already been occupied for 40 years by the Saracens when the Holy Roman Emperor, Charlemagne, laid siege to it intending to starve them out. However, their leader at that time, Mirat, a ferocious Muslim ruler and his men had

sworn an oath to Mohammed that he and his men would die before surrendering to any mortal man.

Knowing that the Muslims were starving, Bishop Roracius from



the nearby diocese of Le Puy asked for a meeting with Mirat. When they met, the bishop offered Mirat an honorable way out of his oath. "Brave prince," he said, "you have sworn never to yield to any mortal man. Could you not with honor make your surrender to an immortal Lady? Mary, Queen of Heaven, has her throne in Le Puy and I am her humble servant there." (from "The

Marian Option: God's Answer to a Civilization in Crisis" by Carrie Gress, PhD, TAN Books, 2017, pp. 64-65)

At this point we ought to know that in the 4th century the Blessed Virgin Mary had appeared several times to a sick Christian woman in the town of Le Puy. The woman suffered from an incurable disease and the Blessed Virgin told her in a vision to go to the top of Mt. Corneille in Le Puy. She instructed the woman to sit down on an old stone altar that pagans had placed there in ancient times. The woman did as she was told and was healed. Then Mary told the woman to tell the bishop of Le Puy to build a shrine there in her honor. Climbing the mountain, the bishop discovered that the ground was covered in deep snow, even though it was the middle of July. In 430 AD a shrine was built there and a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary was placed on top of the old pagan altar. It became known as the "Throne of Mary, Queen of Heaven" and a popular pilgrimage site and source of healing.

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Director's Letter

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Getting back to our story, Mirat and his men surrendered to Mary, Queen of Heaven, and were baptized. At his baptism Mirat was given the name "Lorus" which over the centuries became transformed into "Lourdes", the name of the place where Mary had won another victory without a drop of blood being shed. This leads me to think that since Muslims have great respect for Mary in the Koran, it will be through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary that peace between Christians and Muslims will be achieved and many conversions to Christianity accomplished.

Over one thousand years later, in 1858, when France and most of Europe had been thrown into turmoil by the French Revolution, and the Church was being persecuted, the Blessed Mother appeared to a poor, sickly teenage girl named Bernadette. The Blessed Virgin told her to dig for a stream of water in which pilgrims could wash themselves. Mary also wanted a shrine to be built there in her honor where people could come in pilgrimage, wash in the water of the spring that St. Bernadette had discovered, do penance and pray the rosary. Immediately, there were miraculous healings. For instance, after applying the water of Lourdes to his injured eye, a stone mason blinded by a flying splinter of rock, received back his sight. A woman with a crippled arm had it instantaneously healed. Since then, millions have come every year. Some have received miraculous healings, but millions more have had their faith restored. After all, isn't the most important healing that of the soul,

believing in the love of God for us and giving ourselves in love to Him and His service.

Our life on earth is very temporary. Although the world was made incredibly beautiful, it is full of a lot of suffering and many difficulties, most of which are due to sin. Jesus came to bring everyone to a world so beautiful that "eye has not seen and ear has not heard, nor has it entered into the mind of man what God has prepared for those who love Him," (I Corinthians 2:9). Mary's mission is to help bring us there. At the wedding feast of Cana in Galilee she admonished us to "Do whatever He tells you," for Pope John Paul II said, "Man is incapable of understanding himself fully without Christ. He cannot understand who he is, nor what his true dignity is, nor what his vocation is, not what his final end is." (June 2, 1979)

In all our necessities and difficulties we should go to Mary. She is our

Mother, and never says, "No". She may say, "Wait," or "I have something better for you," but she will never deny the help that her suffering children need. Count on it!

At present the Sanctuary of Lourdes is still mostly closed to pilgrims. However, with those who have access to a computer, a virtual pilgrimage is possible (Google up "Virtual pilgrimage to Lourdes"). However, even without going to Lourdes we can still go to Mary, go to confession and communion, pray the rosary and even ask for some water from Lourdes (see the enclosed order form in this magazine). Meanwhile may the powerful protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary surround, guard and guide you and yours through the trials of this life and all the way to heaven. Peace and Blessings!

Fr. George Szal, S.M.

Director

Sub Tuum Praesidium Prayer

This prayer, first found in a Greek papyrus, c. 300 A.D., is the oldest known prayer to the Virgin Mary.

*We fly to your protection,
O Holy Mother of God.
Listen to our prayers
and help us in our needs.
Save us from every danger,
glorious and blessed Virgin.*





Readers Write

My cousin has cancer of the bladder and kidneys. He is truly suffering, and I ask for your prayers. You had sent 10 bottles of Lourdes water to my niece. On her last visit to the doctor, they indicated that she need not come back for a couple of months. They could not detect any cancer and she is now eating. **MP**

Enclosed is my \$200 donation for 30 bottles of your Lourdes water. Please accept the extra money to further your wonderful works of our Blessed Mother. I do pass out many bottles of my Lourdes water to friends, the elderly in nursing facilities, etc. These 93 years old plus appreciate having this Lourdes Water. The Blessed Mother is very good to me, so I want to continue my "giving to those in need." God bless you and your staff for making this possible. **MR**

I feel I need to let you know about a miracle I have received from using the Lourdes water and the intercessions of Our Lady of Lourdes and Saint Bernadette. I have been having an eye injection in my right eye for several years with different problems behind my eye. When I started

these injections, my vision was 20-60. The doctor told me it is now 20-30. He told me something wonderful has happened. I say a miracle. I have kept the faith to reach 20-20 vision, still using the Lourdes water. I thank you for getting Lourdes water to those who ask and pray. God's blessing always be with you. I would like to order two more bottles for friends who are having eye problems. **SD**

I remember very well Fr. Roland Lacasse, SM. I loved the many articles he wrote for "Echoes from Lourdes," and have saved many of them. Through the years, when I wrote to him, he graciously answered me, and we even exchanged Christmas cards. Father was such a good man and, indeed, a Holy priest. I knew he had not been well and was in a nursing home. I am so sorry that he is gone – a real loss to all of us who were so fond of him. But you and I both know that he is enjoying his beautiful and rich reward in Heaven. I would so much appreciate it if you could re-reprint in the Echoes the many beautiful, useful and much needed articles he wrote. I am professed 55 years at Visitation Monastery. I always

gained something special from what he wrote. He was so full of faith, wisdom and love for his vocation, the Church and St. Bernadette. May our dear Lord comfort each of you in your grief. Fr. Roland Lacasse could light up a room and our spirits. He will always be looking over each one of you and you now have a new Saint in Heaven. A final and sudden thought – maybe from the Holy Spirit. It would be wonderful to publish his talks in book or booklet form. Maybe you would consider that...a precious keepsake. **SR. MGT**

I just learned of Fr. Roland Lacasse's death. We had become friends over the years when I sent donations in memory of my Mom. He was a dear friend. Enclosed is a donation to Our Lady in Fr. Lacasse's memory. Could a candle be lit at Lourdes in France in his memory? My sympathy on your Order's loss. May he Rest in Peace. **CG**

Enclosed find two checks: one for Lourdes water and the second in memory of Fr. Lacasse. He was a wonderful human being and priest. He will be truly missed! **CV**



MARIST GUIDANCE

BY FR. FRANCIS A. GRISPINO, S.M.

The article that follows was shared with me by a friend and former classmate from high school seminary days. It is a testimony of spousal love. It cries out for our attention because it is a counter weight to our “throw away” culture. It gives needed balance and rectitude to avoid inconveniences that confront us in today’s world. This personal testimony expresses the fortitude needed to embrace one’s spouse with an open heart, care and undying love.

In your charity, remember Bob and Ellen in your prayers.

His name is Mr. Dementia....

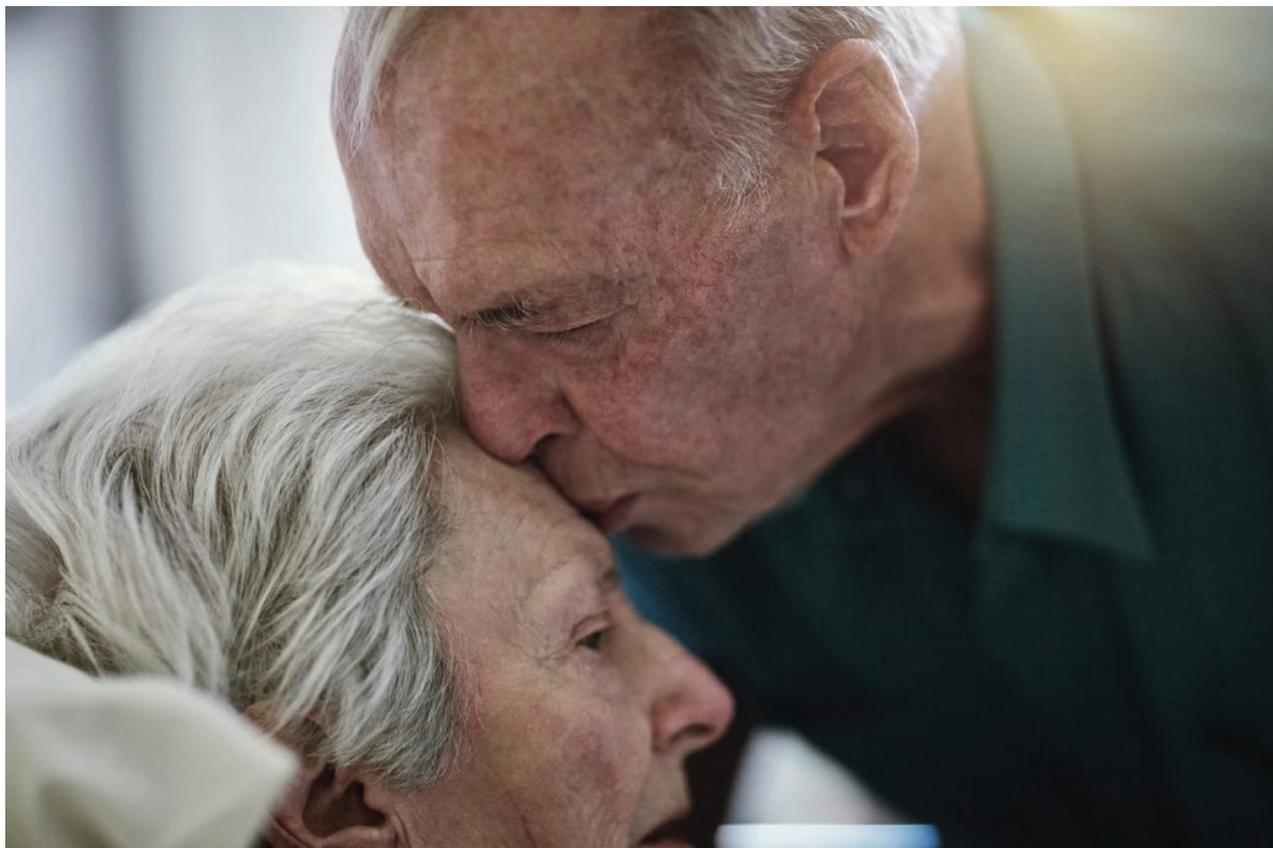
A thief came into our home today. His name is Dementia. He didn’t ask permission, nor warned us that he was coming. He just came in, made himself at home, and immediately attacked my wife, Geneva Ellen Pelletier, in a most terrible way. We tried to stop him with all possible means. But nothing worked. He was here to stay, and everything we tried was to no avail.

His method of operation was most heartless. Slowly but surely, he proceeded to remove all vestiges of Geneva Ellen’s

memory. Day by day, he took a bit more here, and a bit more there, until slowly but surely her complete memory was under siege. Now most of the day she spends looking at TV without comprehension of what she’s looking at. You talk to her and she has that faraway look which tells you that she is not grasping what you are saying. She’s on her way down that lonely corridor all by herself, unable to take anyone along with her.

It is very sad and hurtful to look into your partner’s eyes of 65 years, your best friend, your constant companion, your

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MARIST GUIDANCE

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lover, and seeing her drift away day by day. They tell us that, eventually, she will have no recollection of even who I am. How sad and hurtful. But if there is anything positive in all of this it is that there is no pain associated with this affliction. No pain that is to her, but indeed pain to all those she leaves behind.

They tell us that a day will come when we will have to "place her somewhere," away from her loved ones and her little dog "Sugar Plum." Placing her in a strange place by herself will never happen if I

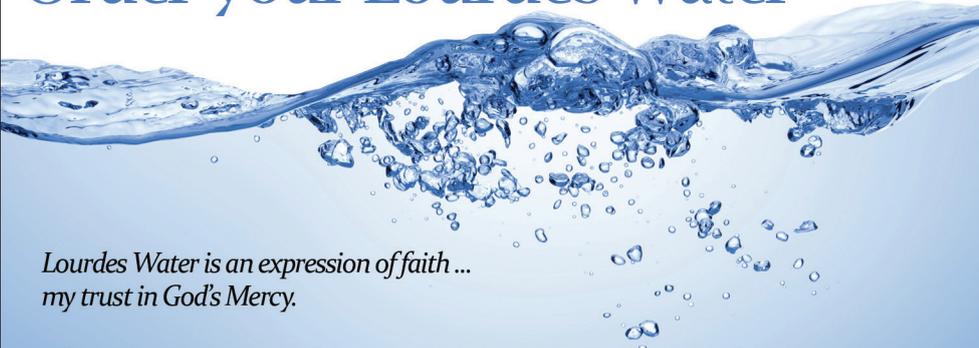
have any say in the matter. We will continue to do everything possible for her in order to meet her physical needs and comfort. This we will do so long as there is a breath left in my body. If anyone attempts to place her elsewhere, they'll have to take me first. Whatever funds we have will be used on those things she will need. After we run out of funds, we will steal, beg or borrow to keep her with us. This is our iron-clad commitment to her. This is the very least we can do since she has earned and deserves that from us.

So, Mr. Dementia, take your best shot. You have an adversary facing you who is determined to obstruct your every move. You may win in the long run, but strong impediments will be placed in your way in the short run. You will never conquer over love.

Composed on behalf of all of Geneva Ellen's friends and loved ones.

By: Robert "Bob" Pelletier, her loving husband.

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 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

Please allow 3-6 weeks for delivery

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
 Postal mail to:
 LOURDES CENTER
 P.O. Box 15575
 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.

E. JOSEPH HOFFMAN, PA
ALICE HOFFMAN, PA
CARMELA MEROS, OH
ANN C. MILLS, RI
WILLIAM J. KIRSTON, MA
AGNES FRICKER, CT
BARBARA PETERSON, LA
JUNE HELASH, MI
VIOLA M. GRILLI, RI
STEVEN CLARK, OH
PATRICIA SCHWARTZ, CO
PATRICIA UZDZICNSKI, PA

CLAIRE MAYNARD, MA
MARTINA MCDONALD, MA
VERONICA SCUDIERI, FL
RITA MICHELS, SD
MARGARET BLACK, VA
GRETCHEN STERNFELS, LA
SR. AGNES T. THORNTON, OH
WALTER E. SCHARF, OH
LORETTA ATKINS, IL
LUCILLE MAXWELL, TX
JOSEPH KOSIBA, OR
FRANCES J. STANLEY, MA
STANLEY F. HIMELINSKI, PA
PATRICIA ANN LINDSAY, MD
MARGARET HEALEY, MA
TONY LEAHY, NJ
JUSTINE MUSTRO, MA

J.M. JOHNSON, KY
MARY V. ROSE, MA
LUCY JOSEPH, AK
REGINA M. MENK, MO
ROSA PACHECO
MARVIN CAPOUN, NE
JOAN BARANOWSKI, TX
THEODORE J. CRAUSWAY, DC

Our Gift Center



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

- 2020 WALL CALENDAR (LIMITED SUPPLY).....\$10.00
- 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
- OUR LADY OF LOURDES PINS.....\$3.50
- BOOKLET: "LOURDES AND OUR LADY".....\$4.00
BY FR. JOHN LYNCH, S.M.

Please send your order with payment to:
P.O. Box 15575, 698 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02215-2594

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: Marist Fathers, 698 Beacon St.
P.O. Box 15575, Boston, MA 02215-0010

Affiliations

Remembrance in 50 Masses Yearly
and at our Weekly Perpetual Novena

Requested by: _____

Phone Number: _____

Offering: 1 year \$2.00
3 years, \$5.00, Lifetime, \$10.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____



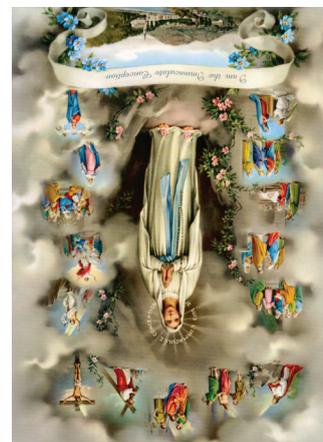


On Friday, September 11 and Friday, September 25
and Friday, October 9 and Friday, October 23,
The Marist Fathers and Brothers of the Lourdes Center
will be praying for you.

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

Please send us your intentions: _____

Please direct your intentions, and any offering you'd like to send, to: Marist Fathers,
698 Beacon Street, P.O. Box 15575, Boston, MA 02215-0010



Lourdes Echoes

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to Our Lady and interest in her shrine at
Lourdes.

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