



“Go and tell the priests...”

BEFORE LEAVING, A LITTLE HISTORY:

On Tuesday 2nd March 1858, during the 13th apparition, the Virgin Mary spoke to Bernadette saying, “Go and tell the priests to build a chapel here and that people should come in procession!”

The Lady of Massabielle entrusted this real mission to her little messenger. And so, Bernadette had to go and see Father Peyramale, the parish priest. Ever since the Apparitions had begun three weeks previously, she still had not seen him. He remained very cautious and refused to go to Massabielle. But that day, the Virgin Mary herself had requested the meeting.

Bernadette was very apprehensive and was accompanied on her visit to the presbytery. The priest was on the defensive, and rebuked the messenger before he had even listened to her! Bernadette only had time to deliver half the message. She forgot the part about the chapel. So she had to return to the presbytery in the evening to complete her errand. This was an important stage in the Apparitions, since Mary had finally articulated the reason for her presence in Lourdes. She wanted a sanctuary and pilgrimages there. She wanted the priests and the bishops to organise it all.

Mary is the one who best knows what a priest is. She teaches us what it is to be priests in the image of her Son, the only priest of the New Covenant.

AT THE DOOR OF THE PRESBYTERY:

At the Annunciation, Mary responded to the Angel saying, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; let everything be done to me according to your word.” (Luke 1:38)

She was completely open to the will of God. She thus resembles Christ, who from all eternity responds to the Father to do his will.

“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I; send me!’” (Is. 6:8)

In the reply she gave to the Angel, Mary responded on behalf of all humanity, and thus bore within her the future Church. She participates in the priestly mission of her Son. In the same way, priests give their lives to be at the service of the Church. They are priests so that they can answer before God in the name of the Church

PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

May they be faithful in following the Word of God like the Virgin Mary.
May they intercede for all men and women in the hope of salvation.

PRAYER FOR PILGRIMS

May all be filled with life by the hope of the salvation of all men and women.
May everyone respond to God’s call.

----- Detachable slip to leave in the urn at St Bernadette’s altar -----

Letter from Saint Bernadette to Abbé Bouin (29th August 1864)

You ask me if I have understood the full extent of your thought when you tell me that I was to be of great use to you, alas! me, miserable creature that I am, I believe quite the opposite, Father, that it is rather you who are of great use to me for the salvation of my soul, I hope however that this good Mother will have pity on us, she knows that we can do nothing without her help, so she must have pity on her children.



AT THE TOMB OF FATHER PEYRAMALE (CRYPT OF THE PARISH CHURCH):

During the Wedding at Cana, Mary sees the misery of the wedding guests who have run out of wine. She challenges her Son to action. Then she turns to the servants to urge them to be faithful to Christ.

The mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' (John 2:3-5) Mary thus directs us towards Christ the High Priest, who sees the misery of his People and who is sent to deliver them. She becomes part of her Son's work. And she also urges us to work for the Kingdom. The priests stand in the Church like the servants at the wedding, they who know where the good wine comes from, because they have drawn living water in abundance...

PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

May they be at the service of the People of God by announcing the Gospel and celebrating the sacraments of the Church.

May they be devoted to the work of salvation.

PRAYER FOR PILGRIMS

May all put themselves at the service of their most vulnerable brothers and sisters.

May all hear the calls of the poorest.

AT ST BERNADETTE'S ALTAR:

At the foot of the Cross, Mary stands and witnesses Christ's sacrifice. She gives her loving consent to his cruel death for the salvation of all humankind. She is united with her Son, the High Priest of the New Covenant, who offers his own body, fashioned in her virginal womb. This is where the Church is born. Mary becomes Mother of the Church.

When Christ came into the world, he said, 'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt-offerings and sin-offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, "See, God, I have come to do your will, O God" (in the scroll of the book it is written of me). (Hebrews 10:5-7)

By her presence at the Cross, Mary the Mother of the Church, opens the possibility for all believers to be united with the sacrifice of Christ by the spiritual offering of their life. Thus, through Mary, every believer can offer his or her own life for the salvation of his or her brothers.

PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

May they celebrate the sacrifice of the Mass every day for the salvation of souls.

May they give God's forgiveness for sins.

PRAYER FOR PILGRIMS

May all offer their lives as a spiritual sacrifice in communion with Christ.

May all choose Mary as mother to work for the salvation of souls.

----- *Detachable slip to leave in the urn at St Bernadette's altar* -----

Write down the names of the priests whom you wish to entrust to the Virgin Mary
