

To Comment, Request Copies,  
Inquire or Make a Donation:

Tel: (315) 476-0026

Visit us on the Internet:  
[www.LourdesVolunteers.org](http://www.LourdesVolunteers.org)

#### OUR MISSION:

"To extend the invitation  
of the Immaculate Conception  
as given to Bernadette  
in the Grotto at Lourdes;  
to serve the sick and suffering  
at Lourdes and at home,  
following the loving example  
of St. Bernadette in simplicity,  
humility and obedience."



Our Lady of Lourdes Hospitality North American Volunteers  
107 Michaels Ave, Syracuse, NY 13208 USA

## Lourdes Letter

The newsletter for friends of Our Lady and St. Bernadette

STAMP  
here



## Experience the Blessings of Pilgrimage!

Many people want to go to Lourdes to seek healing because of their suffering or that of a loved one. Others go to Lourdes to help those who are suffering, even when they are strangers. What unites all pilgrims and volunteers is that they go in response to an invitation from Our Holy Mother, to renew their faith and have special time in a holy place with Our Lord and Our Lady. Give us a call or visit our website to start your application today!

[www.LourdesVolunteers.org](http://www.LourdesVolunteers.org) (315) 476-0026



Don't forget to connect with us on social media!

Become  
a  
Member!

Our Lady of Lourdes Hospitality North American Volunteers



Founded July 16, 2002

# Lourdes Letter

The newsletter for friends of the Immaculate Conception and St. Bernadette



## Transaction or Transformation?

With the seemingly limitless power of the internet, you can do and buy almost anything you want. You can find cheap airfare and hotels, attend virtual seminars, and listen to podcasts on every topic imaginable. You can even meet new people and forge new friendships. When transactions can be so easily completed through the power of technology, one wonders: *Why would anyone prefer to attend a Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience, obtain Lourdes Water or go to Lourdes?*

As people of faith, we know there is a stark difference between a transaction and a transformation. In a transaction, two parties interact merely to exchange one thing for another. In a transformation, often through a holy experience, God's action in our hearts renews and heals our souls, bringing us into closer relationships with others. This grace profoundly changes hearts, minds and spirits, illuminating a way forward.

The most important of our relationships is the one we have with God. Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Wonderful Mother, wants only the best for us: her Son Jesus. Her appearance at Lourdes 160 years ago, the dozens of documented miracles and the thousands of undocumented miracles are part of Our Blessed Mother's work to draw each of us to her Son. During this anniversary year, the "Year of Bernadette," we pray that we may all open our hearts and souls to transformation! As Jesus says, "Behold, I make all things new!" Rev. 21:5

### 160 years after the apparitions, why is Lourdes still relevant?

"Lourdes is very special for us and the world. Our Faith is under duress. We pray for divine intervention and Our Lady of Lourdes is a key intercessor. God has given us a beautiful, prosperous state, but our underpinnings are eroding. Only prayer will reverse this. Our Blessed Mother brought back Catholicism to Mexico through Guadalupe, France through Lourdes and Portugal through Fatima. Those apparitions changed the world. We pray they will change our world again."

Don, Volunteer & Donor

FALL 2019

ISSUE NO. TEN

### Our 20/20 Vision!

Looking back in Gratitude...  
Looking forward in Faith...

### Lourdes Volunteers coming to EWTN!

We are excited to be working  
with EWTN Women of Grace  
on a five-part series. Stay  
tuned for more this winter!

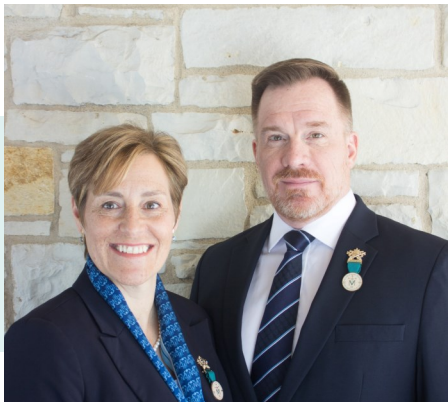
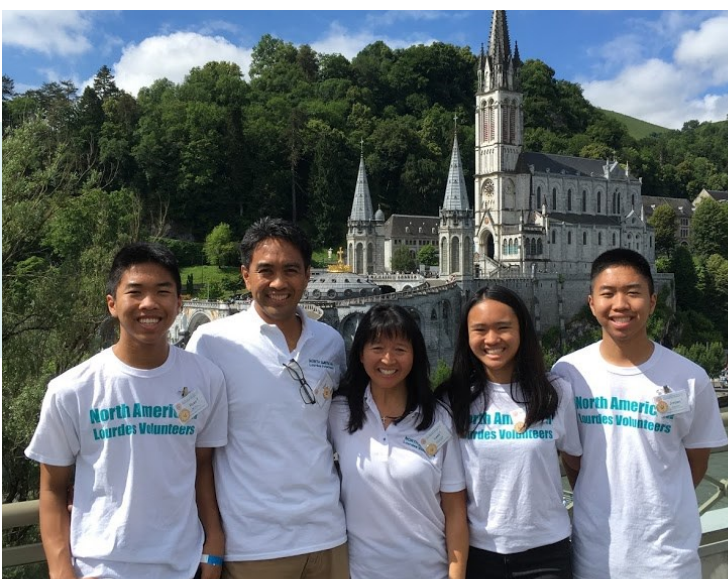
### Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience

A growing number of guides  
continue to share the  
Message of Lourdes across  
America and beyond!

### Breaking ground on Guadalupe House!

Shovel hit the dirt on March  
25th! With construction  
underway, we look forward  
to a 2020 move-in!





## Lourdes Volunteers in 2019

February

4,800 Bottles of Lourdes Water  
shared over the February 11th  
Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes!

April

Our Board journeyed to Rome,  
where they were featured on  
EWTN's *Vatican Insider*!

June

Special Needs Pilgrimage brought  
100 Faithful to Lourdes!  
Andrea's Wish made the  
journey possible for  
14 Special Needs Pilgrims!

September

Fall Schedule for Lourdes Virtual  
Pilgrimage Experience™  
announced. Our guides will reach  
over 150 groups with the Message  
of Lourdes in 2019!

Every Day

Each and every day we pray for our  
members and donors who make  
our mission possible.

Join us to *love without measure*!  
Become a part of our Lourdes  
Family and register your  
membership today!

## “Lourdes is a beautiful place of healing, peace and love, where heaven touches earth!”

### The Rivera Family, California

Advance Team and Youth Volunteers, 2016 & 2018

“When we think of Lourdes, we think of Mary and her love for us as our Mother. We think of Bernadette’s courage and faithfulness. We think of the peacefulness of the Sanctuary. But most of all, we think of the pilgrims. They go through unbelievable hardships on a daily basis. It is tempting for anyone facing challenges in their life to lose hope and turn away from God. However, these pilgrims had faith far beyond any that we have ever seen. It was truly an inspiration to our family.

Our most favorite aspect is the opportunity to get to know the pilgrims and to have the honor of serving them while they are on a very special faith journey. On our last day, one man stood up and said, ‘This trip has been the best week of my life.’ A pilgrimage to Lourdes changes lives, as God provides healing, compassion and love. As volunteers, we are honored to witness this and are transformed as well.

You may think you are going to Lourdes to give to others, but actually, you will receive so much more in return.”

### Melinde, Florida

Medical Volunteer since 2008

Virtual Pilgrimage Host since 2016

“As a pilgrimage Head Nurse, my favorite aspect of pilgrimage is helping the sick and making it possible for them to have a holy pilgrimage to Lourdes. We have traveled with pilgrims with cancer, kidney failure and quadriplegia, as well as pilgrims on ventilators, oxygen and hemodialysis. While some are at the very end of their lives, all are with hope for a physical or spiritual miracle. Serving the special needs allows me to experience the love that emanates from those we serve. There is a lot of inner joy and peace in Lourdes.

When I think of Lourdes, I always remember praying the Rosary, kneeling down in the spot where St. Bernadette knelt when the Virgin Mary appeared to her in the Grotto. Being in Lourdes, I am away from the disruptions of my daily life, and it is in those moments that I feel Our Lady bringing me closer to her Son.”

### Pam & Jim, Wisconsin

Volunteers since 2009

Board Members since 2019

"Lourdes is significant in our lives because of the abundant, transforming grace we receive. As we walk with others, we witness the beautiful way the sick are loved and treated with great dignity. It reminds us of how God sees and loves all of us in our own brokenness. We experience that love tangibly in Lourdes and we feel called to participate in His merciful love through our service. We become family; we become healed. It is so beautiful; we often say it is like heaven on earth.

We remain active with Lourdes Volunteers because we both feel called by Our Lady, but also because it fills us with great joy and peace. Sharing this call together has been a beautiful blessing for our marriage and our family."

### Pam, New York

Pilgrimage Director since 2007

100+ times to Lourdes

“Surely, Our Lady of Lourdes places the desire to serve in our hearts! It is a profound privilege to serve her pilgrims, and the experience will truly change your life. It is in giving of ourselves that we receive the graces that are abundant in Lourdes. No one leaves empty-handed; all are blessed and lifted up. As we deepen our own faith through our humble acts of service, we learn so much about ourselves and grow! Lourdes is a beautiful place of healing, peace and love, where heaven touches earth!”

### Belen, Florida

Medical Volunteer since 2017

Board Member since 2019

“As a pilgrim and volunteer in Lourdes, I have experienced feelings of heavenly peace and joy that I have never felt before. My faith has grown significantly, and I hope and pray that I have become a better person and child of God, too. As a new member of the board, I continue to offer up not just my time and talent, but also the treasure with which God has blessed me to put to good use during my earthly life. These help to spread the Gospel Message of Lourdes!

### Gilly & Rhonda, New York

Special Needs Pilgrims, 2019

“Our pilgrimage was filled with so many blessings! The most surprising was our fellow pilgrims: the sick and their caretaker family members, the nurses, doctors, priests and volunteers. There is no way to express the connection, the joy, the love we shared. We all journeyed together. We shared together. We prayed together. And strangers became a family with mutual understanding, mutual faith, mutual love. Since coming home, we have started to reach out to each other. An unforeseen gift from Our Lady!

We miss Lourdes. It is a place where heaven touched earth through our Mother Mary...and she is still there! We miss the care of our nurses, doctors and volunteers, but even more, we miss the friendships. We miss our new family. We are so very grateful for Our Lady calling us to Lourdes! And when we encounter an especially challenging day, we close our eyes and return to the Grotto.”

## Remembering Fr. Francis T. Menei

Father Menei served as a Spiritual Director to our Apostolate since he first joined us on pilgrimage in 2013. Fr. Menei dedicated his time to our Special Needs Pilgrimages, offering daily Mass, council, and reflections for the Association.

“When you see the Basilica and the Grotto, and the volunteers assisting pilgrims in the baths of the holy water, you experience the love God has for you.”

We pray in thanksgiving for the gift of Father Francis Menei and ask your prayers for him.



1938-2019

## Sharing The Message & Liquid Grace of Lourdes

Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience™ re-creates a pilgrimage to Lourdes without ever leaving home, guiding pilgrims through: a prayerful visit to the Grotto, the experience of the water, prayer in a Rosary procession and a Eucharistic blessing. With new guides and dates set around the country each year, we bring the Message of Lourdes with those unable to make pilgrimage to France. Visit our website to find a Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience™ near you. Come pray with us!

We are privileged to share Lourdes Water directly from the Grotto Spring to individuals in the United States and Canada! Call or email your requests to [water@lourdesvolunteers.org](mailto:water@lourdesvolunteers.org).

