

# Saint Bernadette

1844 - 1879



# Saint Bernadette

- She was born in 1844 to a poor family in Lourdes, in France.



# Saint Bernadette

- She was baptised when she was 2 days old at her parish church in Lourdes.
- Bernadette was one of 9 children.



# Saint Bernadette

- She suffered from asthma from an early age.
- She had a happy childhood because of her parents' love for her.
- She grew up in a home that wasn't very pleasant because her family were poor.

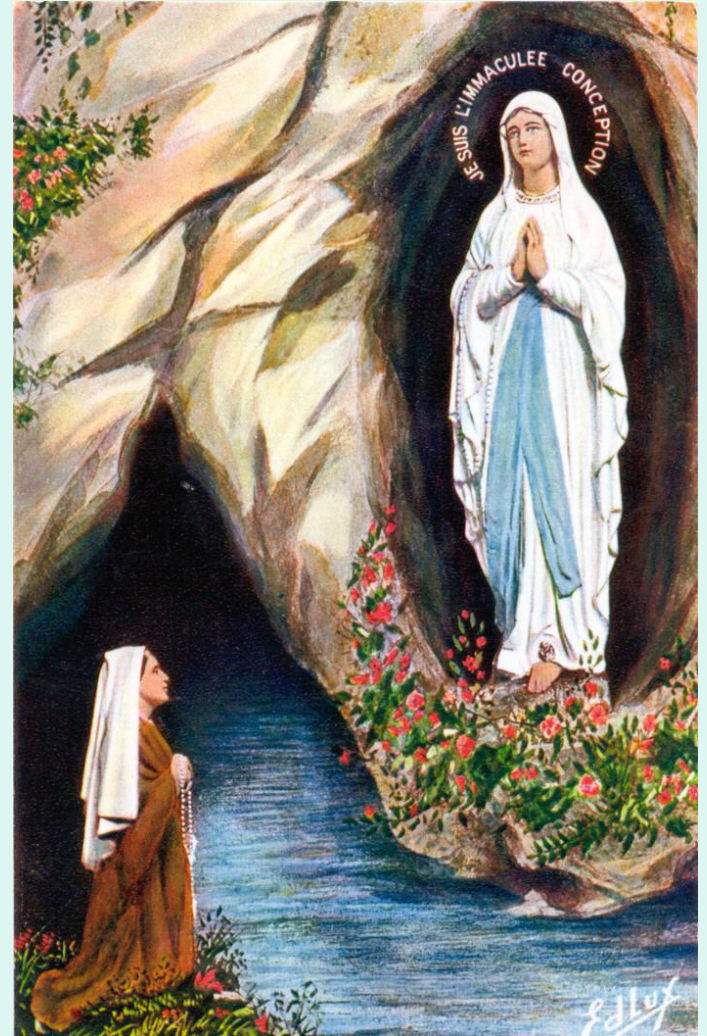


# Saint Bernadette

- Bernadette was 13 years old when she started to learn French, and to read and write.
- She was the eldest daughter so she was put in charge of her brothers and sisters while her parents worked.
- She couldn't go to school because she had to help her family.

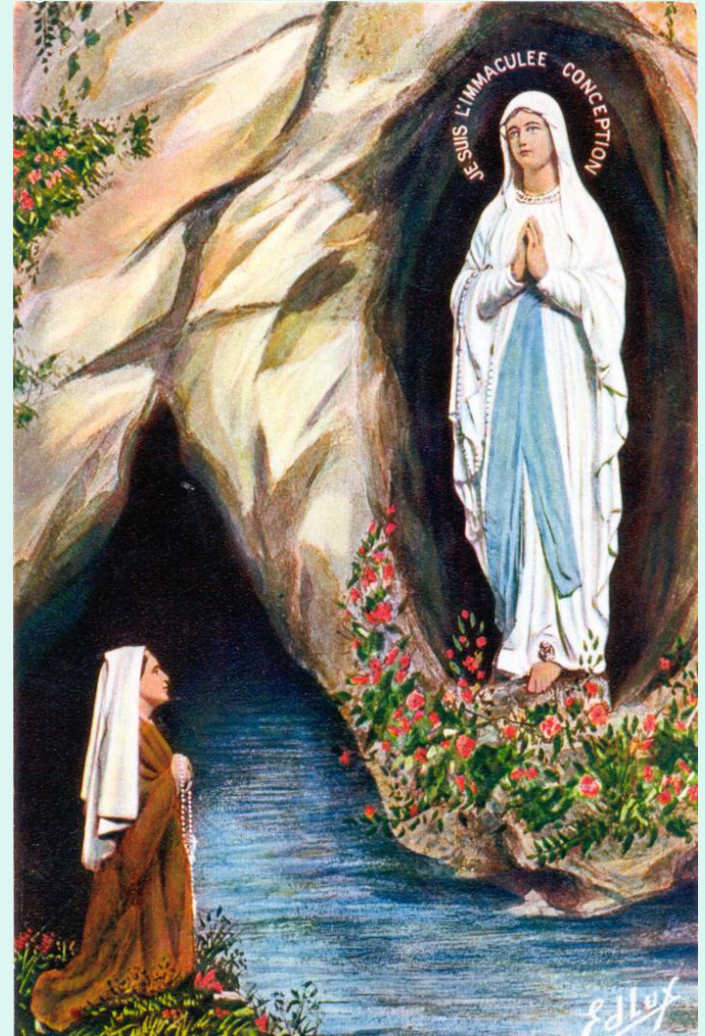
# Saint Bernadette

- One day Bernadette went to collect firewood with her sister and a friend when something happened that completely changed her life and the place where she lived.



# Saint Bernadette

- This was the first of 18 visions, when she described seeing ‘a small young lady’.
- She said that the beautiful lady had told her to go back, but Bernadette’s Mother didn’t want her to.



# Saint Bernadette

- Bernadette' described her as the lady, but it was really the Virgin Mary, the mother of God.
- Bernadette was the only person to see her.





# Saint Bernadette

- Not everybody believed Bernadette's story, so soon people would follow her to see for themselves.
- The lady told Bernadette to drink from the spring that flowed under the rock. So she tried digging into the mud, until eventually she found clear drinking water. But the onlookers, just saw mud on her face and didn't believe her.

# Saint Bernadette

- But in the next few days a spring flowed and people thought the water had special healing powers. People still visit the spring today in the hope that it will heal and cure them. Bernadette always believed that faith and prayer cured the sick.



# Saint Bernadette

- Bernadette decided that she wanted to devote her life to God. She went to a convent in Nevers.



# Saint Bernadette

- She spent the rest of her life there, helping others and creating beautiful embroidered garments for church.
- She died on 16<sup>th</sup> April at the age of 35.



She is the patron saint of the sick, the family and of poverty.

5 million people visit Lourdes every year.