



**A very large THANK YOU for all of the gifts, prayers and well wishes that I received at Easter!**

**They are greatly appreciated.**

**ROSARY ON THE COAST**

**For Faith, Life and Peace in the British Isles**



Fr Miceal Beatty the Parish Priest will be leading the Rosary and it will take place at St Thomas of Canterbury & English Martyrs Church, 31 Magdalen Road, St Leonard's on Sea, East Sussex, TN37 6ET. I would like to get a group from St. Anthony's to go to St. Thomas of Canterbury parish and pray the Rosary with those who gather there. **Sunday April 29th 2018, the 5th Sunday of Easter, is both providentially the Feast of Our Lady of Faith & St. Catherine of Siena, who is one of the co-patrons of Europe. This frames our initiative in the wider context of re-Christianising our great continent. BE THERE TO START TO START THE ROSARY AT 2:00 PM.**

**If you would like to attend this event, please see the sign-up sheet in the back of the church.**

**We will try to car pool or rent a bus if there are enough people. Also, we will organize going to a restaurant on the way home for a late lunch or early supper. If you are not interested in going to the restaurant, please let me know. Thank you!**

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**INTERESTING ENGLISH SAINTS:**

**St. Alphege** began his religious life in the English monastery of Deerhurst, but subsequently withdrew to live as a hermit near Bath. Thereafter he resumed community life, entering the Bath monastery and becoming its abbot. At the early age of thirty, he was consecrated bishop of Winchester. So great was his generosity to the poor that beggars were nowhere to be found in his diocese. Subsequently he was elevated to England's primatial see of Canterbury. When in 1011 Canterbury was overrun by Danish invaders, who began to slaughter the townspeople, the archbishop presented himself to the Danes, declaring, "Spare those poor innocent victims. Turn your fury rather against me." Alphege was thereupon consigned to a dungeon. Afterward, an epidemic among the Danes frightened them into releasing him. Newly freed, Alphege obtained the healing of many victims of the epidemic by his prayers and by distributing to them blessed bread. Despite this, the Danes later stoned and axed him to death in Greenwich. But eleven years later, it was to be a Danish king, Canute, who would honorably transfer Alphege's body to Canterbury.

**St. Francis Page** was a Jesuit martyr of England. Born in Antwerp, Belgium, Francis was a member of an English Protestant family of Harrow-on-the-Hill, in England. Reconciled to the Catholic faith, he was ordained in 1600 and sent from Douai, France, to England. He was arrested there two years later. While in prison, Francis entered the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits. He was martyred at Tyburn, England, and was beatified in 1929.

**Bl. John Finch** was a martyr of England. He was a yeoman farmer of Eccleston, Lancashire, who returned to the Church. He harboured priests and acted as a clerk and catechist. John was arrested and tried with Blessed James Bell. They were executed at Lancaster. Both were beatified in 1929.

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**GOD'S GREATEST GIFTS: GOD'S MYSTERIOUS CHOICES: A GIRL'S UNIQUE VOCATION: GRACE FOR EVERYONE**



It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of the apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes to St. Bernadette Soubirous. During this vision the Blessed Virgin Mary confirmed the teaching of the Catholic Church and her title of IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

The importance of this dogma is that it shows that God is not hindered by time or place when it comes to His desire to forgive our sins of the past and to preserve us from sins in the future. What it means is that God took the merits of His Son's Passion and Death and applied them to Mary at the moment of her conception, i.e. when God created her immortal soul out of nothing and united her soul with her human body. It means that not only was Mary sinless but she was never under the influence of Satan, i.e. she could not even be tempted by the devil. Thus, he hates her more than any other human being in the history of the world.

For us the merits of Jesus' Passion, Death and Resurrection are applied to us whenever we receive a sacrament, when we perform good works or pray or make a sacrifice. They will be completely applied to us when we enter Heaven after a time, short we hope, in purgatory. The

Immaculate Conception proves that this can happen to us also if we allow God to do so. And we can become VERY holy during our lives on earth.

It just makes sense to us that the Mother of God would be without sin at every moment of her existence. But it also shows that it is God Himself who prepared Mary to be the Mother of His Only-Begotten Son. The gift is not meant for Mary alone, but for all of us.

St. Maximilian Kolbe, OFM Conv, founder of the "Militia Immaculatae" was fascinated with this title. I am sure that he repeated very often the phrase that Mary gave to Bernadette when she asked who she was. "I am the Immaculate Conception". Mary used Bernadette's patois so that she could remember the words as she ran to tell her parish priest. When the priest heard this title, he was convinced that Bernadette was telling the truth because there was no way that she could come up with these words on her own. She simply would not understand their meaning or know that the Church had recently defined the dogmas.

"Immaculate Conception" is not just an adjectival description of Mary, but goes to her nature, her identity, her vocation not only as the Mother of God but also as the Mother of the Church, our true Spiritual Mother. She loves each one of us as her own child, desires that each of her children get to Heaven, and she is our most powerful intercessor before the Most Holy Trinity. Prayers to Mary, especially combined with prayers to her chaste spouse, St. Joseph, can be most effective in achieving what God wants for us. Jesus listened to His parents on earth and still does in Heaven.

St. Maximilian saw this title and dogma as essential in spreading the Gospel and in consecrating ourselves and the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Now, God not only gives us most magnificent gifts, but He brings them to us in the most surprising ways. No one who wanted to get a message to the entire world would ever choose St. Bernadette Soubirous for doing so. In fact, no one would pick Bernadette to do anything important, let alone most important. She was uneducated, sickly, shy, humble, and her family was among the poorest of the poor. Nevertheless, Bernadette never would accept the smallest coin from anyone who quite understandably would want to take their surplus wealth to help a family in such great material need. [Ironically, many people in Lourdes and around the world have made a living selling religious articles associated with the apparition and the seer. Mary and Bernadette are good for the economy!]

From "**Saints & Angles**": Bernadette asked the local priest to build a chapel at the site of her visions and the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes is now one of the major Catholic pilgrimage sites in the world. Many other chapels and churches have been built around it, including the Basilica of St. Pius X, which can accommodate 25,000 people and was dedicated by the future Pope John XXIII when he was the Papal Nuncio to France.

Following the miracles and constructions, Bernadette decided she did not like the attention she was getting and went to the hospice school run by the Sisters of Charity of Nevers, where she was taught to read and write. Though she considered joining the Carmelites, her health was too fragile.

On July 29, 1866, Bernadette took the religious habit of a postulant and joined the Sisters of Charity at their motherhouse at Nevers. Her Mistress of Novices was Sister Marie Therese Vauzou and the Mother Superior at the time named her Marie-Bernarde, in honour of her grandmother.

Bernadette spent the rest of her life there working as an infirmarium assistant, and later a sacristan. People admired her humility and spirit of sacrifice. Once a nun asked her if she had temptations of pride because she was favoured by the Blessed Mother. "How can I?" she answered quickly. "The Blessed Virgin chose me only because I was the most ignorant."

Unfortunately, she was diagnosed with tuberculosis of the bone in her right knee and was unable to take part in convent life. She died in the Sainte Croix (Holy Cross) Infirmary of the Convent of Saint-Gildard at the age of 35 on April 16, 1879, while praying the holy rosary.

Even on her deathbed Bernadette suffered severe pain and, keeping with the Virgin Mary's admonition of "Penance, Penance, Penance," she proclaimed "all this is good for Heaven!" Bernadette's last words were, "Blessed Mary, Mother of God, pray for me. A poor sinner, a poor sinner."

Saint Bernadette is often depicted in prayer with a rosary or appealing to the Holy Virgin. She was beatified in 1925 and canonized by Pope Pius XI in December 1933. Saint Bernadette is the patroness of illness, people ridiculed for their piety, poverty, shepherds, shepherdesses, and Lourdes, France. {From [https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint\\_id=1757](https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=1757)}

*Our Lady of Lourdes, our Mother, who appeared to Bernadette, obtain for us the grace to hate sin, to avoid temptations, to strive for holiness and to seek God above all things! St. Joseph, Spouse of Mary, pray for us!*