



Our Lady of Lourdes and Some Thoughts for February 2023

by Marge Loenser:

February may be a small month, day-wise, but it is chock-full of beautiful events. We start off on the second with the Feast of the Presentation of the infant Jesus in the temple. This is a combined feast as it also commemorates the Jewish practice of the purification of the mother after child birth, in this case, our Blessed Mother. It is also Candlemas Day--a festival of lights. It is a day when candles are blessed for use during the year. ("It is better to light just one little candle than to stumble in the dark.")

The feast of St. Blaise is the next day. He is the patron saint of throat diseases. On this day we line up to get our throats blessed. St Blaise was martyred by being be-headed in the fourth century. His remains are in the church of St. Blaise in Croatia, beside the beautiful Aegean Sea.

On the tenth we honor St. Scholastica, the twin sister of St. Benedict, and the patron saint of Benedictine nuns. St. Benedict on a rare visit to his sister, insisted on leaving to get back to his monastery before the day ended, (as was the rule) Scholastica knew she was dying and was reluctant for him to rush off, so she prayed for a snow storm.

Well, it surely snowed! Realizing what she had done, Benedict said to her “What have you done.” She replied “I asked a favor of you and you refused. I asked it of God and He granted it.”

The eleventh, of course, is the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes; Lourdes, France, being one of the most visited pilgrimage sights in the world, where many healings have taken place. It started with our Blessed Mother appearing to a young peasant girl by the name of Bernadette Soubirous. Her incorrupt body is on display in the Chapel of Saint Girard at the Sisters of Charity in Nevers, France. Holy water from Lourdes is a blessing to have and mine unfortunately is running out.

Of course, the 14th is St. Valentine’s Day. There were three martyred priests by that name in the third century. One of them would marry young Roman Soldiers who were forbidden to wed by Emperor Claudius. Valentine was imprisoned for this and while there he healed a young blind woman and started to evangelize this pagan household. He was imprisoned again, and while in prison would exchange letters with the young woman whose blindness he had healed and would sign the letters, from, “Your Valentine” thus the tradition started.

On February 22, lent begins with Ash Wednesday. Let us meditate on how we can improve our spiritual life. Let us deepen our personal relationship with Jesus, our best friend, our brother and our Savior. May God bless us and our families.

Love to all,
Marge



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