

2007-11-21 – PA - DECRETUM occasione completi CL anniversarii a B. V. M. manifestatione

Paenitentiaria Apostolica

**DECRETUM occasione completi CL anniversarii a B. V. M. manifestatione
in Massabiellensi Specu prope Lapurdum**

DECREE according to which is granted a daily Plenary Indulgence on the 150th Anniversary of the Apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Lourdes

On the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of the Apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Grotto of Massabielle near Lourdes, a daily Plenary Indulgence is granted to the Christian faithful who, from 8 December 2007 until 8 December 2008, devoutly and in accordance with the established conditions, visit the Grotto of Massabielle, as well as those who, from 2-11 February 2008, visit a blessed image of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Lourdes solemnly displayed for public veneration in any church, oratory, grotto or suitable place.

God's omnipotence and infinite love have joined together in a marvellous bond the role of Mary, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ and hence, Mother of his Mystical Body the Church, and the salvific work of the Church herself: Blessed Abbot Guericc thus connects the protection sought by the Christian faithful from Mother Mary with the Catholic Church's universal ministry of salvation: "The Blessed Mother of Christ, insofar as she sees herself the mother of Christians by way of mystery, also shows herself to be a mother by her solicitude and tender affection for them.... Consider if her children, prompted by a certain spontaneous sense of faith, do not also acknowledge her as mother as they find refuge, before all else, at the invocation of her name in every trial and danger just like children in the arms of their mother" (*Sermo I, In Assumptione B. Mariae Virg.*).

Similarly, the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* of the Second Vatican Council highlights what we might call the "joint" mission of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary and the Catholic Church: "For Mary, who since her entry into salvation history unites in herself and re-echoes the greatest teachings of the faith as she is proclaimed and venerated, calls the faithful to her Son and his sacrifice and to the love of the Father. Seeking after the glory of Christ, the Church becomes more like her exalted Type, and continually progresses in faith, hope and charity, seeking and doing the will of God in all things" (n. 65).

The history of the Church and the marvellous signs of Marian devotion continually and clearly confirm the ways of Divine Providence and foster devotion among the faithful.

A glance over the nearly 150 years since Mary Most Holy, revealing herself to little Bernadette Soubirous as the Immaculate Conception, wanted a shrine, a treasury of grace, to be built and maintained in the place called Massabielle, in the city of Lourdes, brings to mind the countless number of signs by which the supernatural life of souls and even the health of bodies have benefited much from the goodness of Almighty God. This plan of Divine Providence, accompanied by the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, clearly demonstrates that the integral end of man is the good of the whole human person, both here on earth and especially in eternal salvation.

Since the establishment of the Shrine at Lourdes, the Christian faithful have understood that there the Blessed Virgin Mary, through the ministry of the Catholic Church, desires to provide most lovingly for the complete health of men and women.

For as they venerate the Blessed Virgin Mary in the place "touched by her feet", they refresh themselves with the sacraments, make firm resolutions to lead more perfect Christian lives, perceive more clearly the meaning of the Church and experience the solid reasons for all these things: the very connection of these remarkable events over time has clearly attested to the joint action of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Church: indeed, the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary was defined in 1854, and in 1858, Mary Most Holy appeared to the devout young girl Bernadette Soubirous with ineffable motherly sweetness, uttering the words of the dogmatic definition: "I am the Immaculate Conception".

In order to allow the fruits of renewed holiness to grow from this blessed commemoration, the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI has generously decreed that the gift of a Plenary Indulgence be granted according to the following conditions:

Each and every member of the Christian faithful who, truly repentant, is purified through sacramental confession, restored through the Most Holy Eucharist and offers prayers for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff, will be able to gain a Plenary Indulgence daily, which may also be applied, by way of suffrage, to the souls of the faithful in Purgatory:

A) If, during the year running from 8 December 2007 until the end of 8 December 2008, they devoutly visit the following places, preferably in this order - 1) the parish baptismal font used for the Baptism of Bernadette; 2) the house of the Soubirous family called the "cachot"; 3) the Grotto of Massabielle; 4) the chapel of the hospice where Bernadette made her First Communion - and pause to reflect for an appropriate length of time at each of these Jubilee sites, concluding with the Lord's Prayer, some legitimate form of the Profession of Faith, and the Jubilee prayer or some other Marian invocation.

B) If, from the Feast of the Presentation of our Lord on 2 February 2008 until the end of the Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Lourdes on 11 February 2008, which is also the 150th Anniversary of the Apparition, they devoutly visit a blessed image of the Holy Virgin Mary of Lourdes in any church, chapel, grotto or other suitable place in which it is solemnly displayed, and in the presence of that image perform some pious act of Marian devotion, or at least pause to reflect for an appropriate length of time, concluding with the Lord's Prayer, some legitimate form of the Profession of Faith, and the Jubilee prayer or some other Marian invocation.

C) The elderly, sick, and all those unable to leave home for a just cause, if they consciously reject all sin and have the intention to fulfil the above-mentioned conditions as soon as possible, are likewise able to obtain - at home or wherever they may be - a *Plenary Indulgence*, if, between the days of 2 and 11 February 2008, they complete a "spiritual visit" (*to the aforementioned places*) in the desire of their heart, recite the prayers indicated above, and trustingly offer the pains and discomforts of their own lives to God through Mary.

In order that the Christian faithful may partake more readily of these heavenly gifts, priests who have received approval to hear confessions by the competent ecclesiastical authorities should welcome them with a willing and generous spirit and solemnly lead the recitation of public prayers to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary.

Given in Rome, at the Offices of the Apostolic Penitentiary, 21 November 2007, on the Feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Cardinal James Francis Stafford
Major Penitentiary

Gianfranco Girotti, O.F.M. Conv.
Titular Bishop of Meta, Regent