



# The Marian

A Newsletter Published  
By St. Anthony's Guild

Dear Friends of Our Blessed Mother,

We will be honoring the Blessed Mother on February 11th, with a special Mass in honor of the Marian Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. As you know, February 11th marks the first apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1858 to fourteen-year-old Bernadette Soubirous and she appeared to her 17 more times over the next 5 months. Mary's universal motherhood is a mystery to discover again and again, so she may accompany us all through life's journey. In this

issue, we will share with you our top sites for visiting Lourdes, France, the place where these apparitions all began. Lourdes is now a major Marian pilgrimage site and did you know that only Paris has more hotels than Lourdes? We hope you enjoy celebrating the feast of "Our Lady" and remember The Franciscan Friars will be praying for you now and always.

Many Blessings and Prayers,  
Fr. David Convertino, OFM  
Executive Director, St. Anthony's Guild

## In this Issue

- A Marian Fact
- Through the Lens of a Friar
- Things to do while visiting Lourdes, France
- Recipe: White and Blue Cheesecake Pie

## A Marian Fact

**Did you know that "Our Lady" is a common title given to Mary as a sign of respect and honor. In French she is called "Notre Dame" and in Spanish she is "Nuestra Señora"**



## Through The Lens of a Friar

### Fr. Brian Smail, OFM



Fr. Brian Smail was the former Vocation Director of Holy Name Province in New York City and has now been assigned to the ministry team at St. Francis of Assisi Church in NYC. Here is his story:

For many years, while I was working for Bank of America in Boston,

I frequented St. Anthony's Shrine Church to attend Mass and go to confession. On those visits I came to know some of the Friars that ministered at the Shrine. Fr. Mike Carnevale, O.F.M. was the first Friar I came to know, he worked at the front desk. I worked for the Bank for 15 years, not only in the City of Boston, but also in branches outside of Boston. Through all of those years

I continued to visit St. Anthony's and spend time with the Friars of Holy Name Province. I was very much drawn to their way of life. I spoke first to Fr. Joe Finn, O.F.M., the Vocation Director, and then when he was reassigned, to Fr. Joe Quinn, O.F.M. and Bro. Christopher Coccia, O.F.M. Things progressed and I began a discernment period which involved a visit with Fr. Andrew Reitz, O.F.M. After meeting with Fr. Andrew weekly, I decided to make an application to Holy Name Province and

entered the Pre-Formation Program in the Bronx, NY. I made my simple profession in 1994 in Providence, RI and then attended the Washington Theological Union in Silver Spring, MD. I was ordained a priest in 1999 at St. Francis of Assisi Church in NYC.

My first assignment was back at St. Anthony's Shrine in Boston, MA, where I said Mass, heard confessions and taught adult faith formation. Fr. David Convertino, O.F.M., the Guardian and Executive Director of the Shrine, appointed me to be the Assistant Executive Director of the Shrine and the Director of Finances. I had this assignment from 1999 to 2007, when I was asked to become the Vocation Director for Holy Name Province. I have loved all the work that I have done, from ministering the sacraments at St. Anthony's and also assisting Fr. David in his work at the Shrine. Working with men interested in religious life has been very rewarding. Looking at the quality of the men that have come to us says a great deal about our lifestyle and what we have to offer. I would like to thank each and every one of you who have given so generously over the years, and for making our way of life possible. From a personal standpoint, your support helps us to form these young men to serve the Church. It is an honor seeing each candidate's progress through our formation program and knowing their growth is a direct result of your support, generosity and prayers. I am most grateful to each of you. Please know that you are in my prayers each and every day. God bless.



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## *A Must See Visit To Lourdes, France*

Situated in the Pyrenean foothills, Lourdes has long been an important city. Even before the apparitions of the Virgin Mary appeared in the mid-1800s, the town was known for its fortified castle on the outskirts of town. After Mary appeared to peasant girl Bernadette Soubirous, Lourdes became one of the world's most frequently visited pilgrimage sites, with over 6 million visitors per year. So what's to see and do there today? The Franciscan Friars are sharing our recommended top list of things to see and do for every traveler visiting Lourdes:

**The Massabielle Grotto** - This is where it all began, St. Bernadette's visions of the Virgin Mary are said to have occurred here. This is a sacred place to take the water and pray for miracles.

**The Basilica of the Rosary** - When the Virgin Mary appeared at Lourdes, she seemingly held a rosary in her hand. Its three arches depict the joyful, sorrowful, and glorious mysteries people meditate on.

**The Basilica of the Immaculate Conception** - The large church built on two levels over the Grotto is the first thing you'll notice as you approach the site. This immense building can't be missed. It is situated on top of the rock above the Grotto of Massabielle and behind the Basilica of the Rosary.

**The Maison Paternelle de St. Bernadette** - This was the house of Bernadette's parents after the visions, and you can see items which belonged to the Soubirous family. The house is still run by Bernadette's descendants.

**Le Cachot** - This small prison, in which the Soubirous family was forced to spend a year, is where visitors can see the tiny, 16m<sup>2</sup> room that the family inhabited during the time in which Bernadette saw her many visions.

**The Holy Stairs** - Travelers go up these stairs on their knees. The 28 stairs represent the steps between Pilate and Jesus in the courts, before Jesus was sentenced to death by crucifixion.

**Chateau-Fort of Lourdes** - Go and see the best views of the city and the Pyrenees Mountains as you climb to this impenetrable fortress. The fortress of Lourdes is the town's only major secular attraction, perched atop a rocky outcrop on the edge of the city. The ascent is steep, but a short and rewarding walk. For those for who may find the slope too difficult, you can take the lift up for free. The Château also houses the Musée Pyrénéen, a museum showcasing both regional artifacts and art. There's also a botanical garden which is very nice to see especially if traveling to Lourdes during warmer months.

**Pic du Jer** - We recommend you take a trip here for the most exquisite view over Lourdes, the neighboring town of Tarbes, the Argelès Gazost valley and the peaks of the Pyrenees. The journey up takes roughly three hours, so the recommended route is via the 100-year-old funicular railway, a very scenic trip all in itself! The way down is easier, with a family-friendly journey via an abandoned railway track, which comes out at the point where visitors will have taken the funicular from earlier in the day. The Pic du Jer is also a sight to watch out for at night, as the giant cross at its summit is lit up.

**Candlelit Procession** - At 9 p.m. every night since 1872, a candlelit procession begins at the Prairie and ends in front of the Basilica of the Rosary. You can carry candles and torches, as well as a statue of the Virgin Mary and walk around for a while before receiving a blessing from a priest. People begin to gather at 8:45 p.m. and it is possible for visitors to be part of the choir or rosary too.

**Lourdes Covered Market** - If you visit Lourdes in the summer you can come to the market and experience quality gastronomic offerings, including alpine cheese, hams, jams, and other local delicacies.



## *White and Blue Cheesecake Pie*

The all white cheesecake (white and angel food cakes are also excellent options) symbolizes Mary's purity, and the blueberry topping is symbolic of Mary's blue mantle.

You can opt to top the cake with a small statue of Mary and surround it with a circle of 10 candles, representing one decade of the rosary. If there are children around, let them take turns lighting the candles. Great to serve for any feast celebration or holiday.

### **Ingredients:**

- 1 9" graham cracker crust
- 1 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- pinch of salt
- 2 eggs
- 8 oz. sour cream
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries
- 1 cup water
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons sugar



### **Directions:**

Soften cream cheese. Beat in sugar, beating until fluffy. Add lemon juice, vanilla and salt. Add eggs, one at a time, beating after each. Pour into pie shell and bake at 325 degrees until set, about 25 to 30 minutes. Stir sugar and vanilla into sour cream. Spoon on top of pie and bake 10 minutes longer. In small saucepan, mix cornstarch, cinnamon, and sugar. Bring to a boil, stirring to prevent sticking. Mixture will thicken. Add blueberries. When pie is slightly cooled, spoon cooled blueberry topping over pie. Refrigerate.



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