

1. Before I get to the Saint Bernadette announcements, one reminder for our parents.

If you have a child who is **in second grade, or who is already seven years old**, and needs to prepare for First Penance and First Holy Communion, please register your child now for our First Penance and First Communion classes. There is a link to the form at the parish website.



For now, we are only registering for First Penance and First Communion. In the coming weeks, we will take care of regular religious education. That will include registration for our parish classes, or verification of the religion program your child is already taking at home or in a Catholic school.

So, if your child needs to prepare for **First Penance and First Holy Communion**, please register now.

2. As you can see from today's bulletin insert, plans are coming together for the visit of the relics of Saint Bernadette, and the first thing I want to ask you to consider is volunteering.

It is likely that we will be welcoming pilgrims from throughout the Philadelphia area and beyond, and we need our parishioners to help us welcome them. There are many different ways to volunteer, and you don't have to commit to the entire day. The volunteer information and QR code are in today's insert. If you don't do QR codes, the volunteer form is linked at the top of our home page at ourladylourdes.org... remember, no "of" or you will be at a parish in Columbia, Missouri.

And there is an advantage to volunteering: registered volunteers do **not** need Priority Entrance Reservations for the events taking place during the time they are serving. Your volunteer credentials will give you the access you need. We need people to serve—but we also want our volunteers to be able to experience this pilgrimage themselves. Also, all registered volunteers will have an exclusive time to the relics following the candlelight Rosary procession. So please consider giving us a few hours. The volunteer form will help us match people with the places where their talents and interests will be most useful.

Now, for everyone else, I have a special postcard that I will be giving to our parishioners personally after Mass. Please come and get one from me.

One side gives our parishioners **early access to Priority Entrance Reservations** for three events on Saturday, October 3: the **Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience at 10:00 AM, the 4:00 PM Vigil Mass, and Solemn Vespers at 6:30 PM.** I wanted to make sure that our parishioners had the first chance to participate in these events, while also making them available to the public.

Parishioner reservations open Sunday evening, August 30, at 9:00 PM. On September 8, the reservations will open to the general public.

These reservations are completely free, and **you do not need a reservation simply to come and venerate Saint Bernadette's relics.** We are using Priority Entrance Reservations for these three events because we suspect the church may reach capacity, and we want to be prepared. 

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Your postcard has the QR codes, web addresses, and the parishioner access code. **Please do not share that code outside the parish.** Again, this is our opportunity to give our own parishioners first access before reservations open to the general public.

The other side of the postcard is for our parish picnic on Sunday, October 4. Picnic reservations are already open, and I need you to make those as soon as possible so that we can give the caterer an accurate count.

This is important: **only registered parishioners and the guests included on their reservation will be provided food at the picnic.** Please make sure everyone coming with you is included in your reservation.

This is the only time I am distributing the picnic access code, so keep that postcard until you have made your reservation.

So, three things I want you to remember:

First: volunteer if you can.

Second: If you are a parishioner, get your postcard from me after Mass, and Priority Entrance Reservations open Sunday at 9:00 PM.

Third: register for the parish picnic as soon as possible.

Please take the insert home and read through it. We are preparing to welcome a great many people to Our Lady of Lourdes—but **I want our parishioners not only to welcome the pilgrims. I want you to be pilgrims yourselves.**

VIGIL MASS ONLY

And one special word just for those of you who regularly attend this 4:00 PM Vigil Mass.

I do not want our regular Saturday evening parishioners to arrive for Mass on October 3 and find themselves unable to enter because the church has reached capacity.

So, **on the weekend of September 19**, for those of you who regularly attend this 4:00 Vigil Mass, I will have **physical Priority Entrance Vouchers** available.

You do not need to make an online Priority Entrance Reservation for the 4:00 Mass if you will be using one of those vouchers.

If you already know that you will **not be here the weekend of September 19**, but you normally attend the 4:00 Vigil and want to be here for Mass on October 3, **please let me know. We'll work something out.**

I simply don't want our regular parishioners displaced from their usual Sunday Mass because we are welcoming so many visitors that weekend.