

# **CELEBRATE EASTER**

## **Tuesday, Third Week of Easter**

**Dear Lord, grant us the gift of forbearance  
that we may be patient with our own lives.**

### **Acts 7:51-8:1**

Stephen appealed to the conscience and heart of the elders and scribes and called them to listen to the Holy Spirit and not oppose the work of the Spirit as their fathers did. They became angry and stoned him. Stephen, filled with Spirit and power, praised God and prayed for forgiveness for his persecutors and died.

**Most of us do not experience the kind of persecution that Stephen experienced. However, we do experience criticisms, rejections, prejudices and other such slings and arrows from time to time. We are challenged to bless those who do not bless us and pray for those who burden us and inconvenience us!**

### **Psalm 31**

**Into your hands Lord, I commend my spirit;  
You will redeem me, O Lord, O faithful God.  
My trust is in the Lord;  
I will rejoice and be glad of your kindness.**

### **John 6:30-35**

The context of this conversation is that Jesus, after feeding the crowd, had asked them to begin to work for imperishable bread rather than perishable ones. He asked them to trust him whom the father sent.

The crowd asked for a sign as a proof of his claim to have come from the Father so that they may put their trust in him. They recalled how their ancestors were fed with manna in the desert. Jesus used this opportunity to reveal a new wisdom, hard for them to understand. They had to take him in as their bread of life, the imperishable bread.

**Jesus said, “no one who comes to me shall ever be hungry, no one who believes in me shall thirst again”. Jesus satisfies the hunger and thirst of our hearts!**

**We are called again, today, to take in Jesus as our bread of life, our imperishable bread, the bread that brings us to life eternal.**

**Saint of the Day, April 16 - St. Bernadette Soubirous and 16 other saints are remembered this day.**

Bernadette Soubirous was born on January 7, 1844 and baptized at the local parish church, St. Pierre's, on January 9, her parents' wedding anniversary. Hard times had fallen on France and the family lived in extreme poverty. Bernadette was a sickly child, contracted cholera as a toddler and suffered severe asthma for the rest of her life. She attended the day school conducted by the Sisters of Charity. She could read and write very little due to her frequent illness. She spoke the language of Occitan, which was spoken by the local population of the Pyrenees region at that time and to a lesser degree today. Bernadette joined the Sisters of Charity at Nevers in 1866.

From February to July 1858 near Lourdes, France, a "Beautiful Lady" appeared eighteen times to Bernadette. The Beautiful Lady asked for prayers for the conversion of sinners and penance. Large crowds came to the grotto to hopefully witness some miracle. On February 25, the Beautiful Lady told Bernadette to drink from the fountain and bathe in it, but there was no obvious fountain or spring in the spot shown to her. She began to dig in the moist soil with her hands, and water began to trickle out. Bernadette drank the water and washed her face in it. Within two days, at the site where Bernadette dug in the mud, there was a pool of water overflowing the rocks. Miraculous cures have been attributed to this water.

On February 28 and March 3, the Lady relayed a message to Bernadette to give to the clergy - "Go and tell the priests that a chapel must be built here." Bernadette told her priest Abbé Peyramale who replied that he needed the identity of the mysterious lady. It was during the visit on March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation, that the Lady revealed, "I am the Immaculate Conception." A basilica was built at the site of the grotto and was completed in 1876. She died on April 16, 1879 and was canonized on December 8, 1933.

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