

Voice of the Sanctuary of Rigaud

CANDLELIGHT PROCESSION



After the 7:30 pm Mass, we will gather together for the candlelight procession. Candles will be available in front of the confessionals.

In reciting the Rosary, let us join with all our brothers and sisters around the world who seek the maternal help of Our Lady of Lourdes. Let us keep in our prayers those who suffer, those who hope and those who search for light in the darkness they face.

Let us offer our Rosary especially for the intentions of the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV. Let us ask Our Lady of Lourdes to grant him the graces necessary to guide the Church and help us make the Kingdom of God's love grow on this earth.

May this prayer, humble and trusting, become for each one of us a source of peace, consolation and inner strength.



The Anointing of the Sick — a Source Flowing for All



Twice a year, our Sanctuary opens itself to a particular grace: the anointing of the sick. I believed, like many others, that this celebration came from an ancient tradition. And yet, it only took its current form in 2018. This surprised me... but perhaps this is how God acts: He brings forth something new at the very heart of what seemed unchangeable.

For our Sanctuary has always been a place where pilgrims come seeking healing, peace, a breath to continue the journey. They come to Our Lady of Lourdes as one comes to a mother: with trust, with fragility, with the hope of being welcomed and lifted.

What touches me deeply are the crowds who gather on that day. People who are ill, of course, but also people wounded in other ways: by loneliness, by fear, by the trials of life. And among them, many are not Christians. Yet they come forward, hands open, convinced that Mary can support them, accompany them, perhaps even heal them.

Isn't this what happened in the time of Jesus? Men and women who came from far away, strangers to the people of Israel, approached Him with astonishing faith. They did not have the right words, nor the rites, nor the traditions... but they had an open heart. And Jesus welcomed them. He saw in them that trust which touches the heart of God.



Faith is not confined within the visible boundaries of the Church. It moves within every person of goodwill. It slips into wounds, into questions, into the stirrings of the heart. It sometimes appears where we least expect it.

This is why the anointing of the sick is for everyone. It is not a privilege, but a gift. It is not reserved, but an open door.



And what can we say about those who ask for a little oil to take home? This humble gesture moves me deeply. They want to prolong the prayer, extend it to their loved ones, place the blessing within their home. As if the oil became a discreet thread linking their daily life to the tenderness of God.

And here I wish to profoundly thank those **ladies from the 9am Mass** who work so diligently in the sacristy preparing all those vials of blessed oil for the people to take.

Yes, God is the God of everyone. And Mary, in the Sanctuary, welcomes all her children. She does not ask where they come from, but what they carry in their hearts. A simple and luminous word of Christ comes back to me: "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest."

Perhaps this is, at its core, the anointing of the sick: a path where each person may come with their burden, their fatigue, their hope... and leave with a peace that does not come from us, but from God.



Beautification of the Sanctuary

There are faces around our Sanctuary that we know well. People who, year after year, come to offer their time to make this place more beautiful, more welcoming, more worthy of prayer. I think fondly of **Michelle Montes, Mario Larocque, Sylvain Villeneuve and his sister, Solange**, as well as **Caroline Paquette and husband, Bob Steinhauser**. Their discreet presence, their faithful generosity and their love of the Sanctuary are a blessing for us. I thank them from my heart.



This year, a special grace was given to us: **Joseph Obeika** from Ottawa came to offer an entire week of his vacation to help us. Thanks to him, the hedge near the picnic area has recovered its



shape, and the wooded area

below the grotto has transformed as if by magic. You have to see it to believe it. How to thank someone who puts aside his rest to serve a place so far from his home? Words are too small to express such gratitude.



Before leaving, he was the one who thanked us for welcoming him. And he promised us to come back in the fall to plant hostas in this woodland, then to come back again next year. A generosity that touches the soul and leaves a trace of light.

Yes, I am convinced of it: **the Virgin of Lourdes watches over her Sanctuary**. She inspires these outpourings of goodness, these hands that stretch out, these hearts that give themselves.

Notice to the souls of goodwill: every gesture offered here becomes a silent prayer, an act of love that beautifies not only the Shrine but also the life of those who pass through it.

Mary according to Saint John

The Gospel according to Saint John resembles no other. It is the fruit of a long spiritual maturation, of a contemplation that deepened over the years. This is why certain passages seem to appear almost out of context: they bear the trace of a memory that connects, meditates, and gradually understands. Many scholars believe that the apostle John wrote the essential parts, but that his disciples completed the whole toward the end of the first century, around the year 95. Yet the recurring expression “the disciple whom Jesus loved” has led tradition to recognize in this Gospel the authentic voice of John, one of the Twelve.

In this unique narrative, the Virgin Mary appears only twice: at the beginning and at the end. As though John wished to place Mary at the two thresholds of Jesus’ mission, to signify that one cannot speak of Christ’s redemptive work without her. Knowing her role in the history of the Church, is it not fitting to say that she remains, even today, the Mother of the Church?



At Cana (Jn 2:1–12), Mary is only one guest among others. Yet she is the one who sees what no one else notices: the wine is running out. She perceives the discomfort that is coming, the celebration that risks collapsing, the embarrassment of the newlyweds. And so, simply, she says to Jesus: **“They have no wine.”**



This gesture reveals her heart: a heart attentive, watchful, and responsible for the happiness of others. She also knows that Jesus can act. She does not impose anything on him; she merely entrusts the situation to him.

Jesus’ response is surprising: **“Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.”** Is it a reproach? A distance? A harsh way of

addressing his mother? The word “woman” may unsettle us, but it perhaps echoes the “woman” of Genesis, the helper given to man, the first Eve. Jesus could be saying: “You who are the new Eve, let me enter into the hour set by my Father.”

But Mary is not troubled. She knows her Son. She knows he will do what is needed. So she says to the servants: **“Do whatever he tells you.”** This is her whole faith, her whole trust, her whole mission. And Jesus accomplishes far more than she could have imagined. Is this not true of everything she does for the Church? She presents our needs, and Jesus responds with abundance.

Let us note that the disciples are present at Cana. One of them could be John — the very one who, later, will stand at the foot of the cross beside Mary.

John is the only evangelist to mention Mary at Calvary (Jn 19:25–27). After years of meditation, he understands that Mary accompanied Jesus from the beginning to the fulfillment. She never left her Son's mission. She participated in it with her whole being.

From the height of the cross, Jesus says to his mother: **“Woman, behold your son.”** And to the disciple: **“Behold your mother.”**

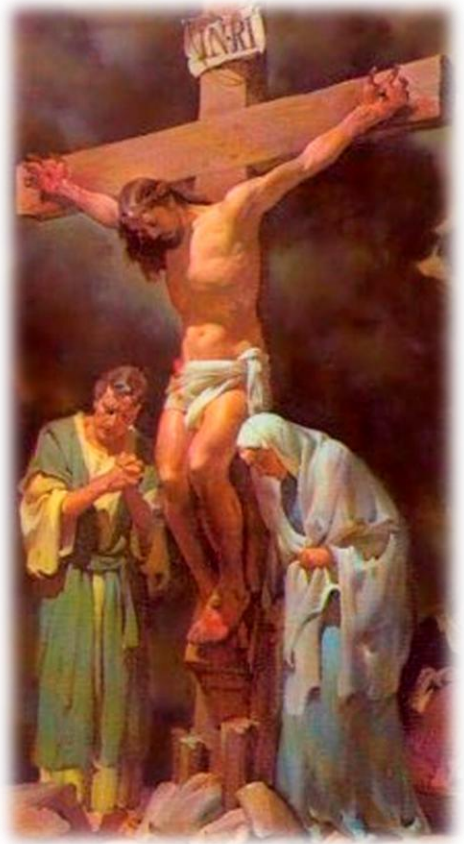
Again, that word “woman.” Jesus widens Mary's motherhood: she becomes the mother of all disciples, the mother of the new humanity. The beloved disciple represents each one of us. In him, Jesus entrusts Mary to the Church, and the Church to Mary.

It is a call: – for Mary, to love all human beings as her children; – for the disciples, to welcome Mary as mother, guide, and presence of tenderness.

For Jesus, for Mary, for John, love has no boundaries. If we are all children of God, how could we hate one another? Happiness belongs to those whose hearts expand to the measure of God's own heart.

Jesus and Mary remain our companions on the journey: they show us how to love, how to serve, how to participate in the salvation of the world.

Whether we contemplate her – as the **faithful disciple**, according to Saint Mark ([Voix du Sanctuaire](#) 2023) – as **mother of the Holy Family**, according to Saint Matthew ([Voix du Sanctuaire](#) 2024) – as **mother of the incarnate Son of God**, according to Saint Luke (Infolettre 2025) – or as **mother of the Church and of humanity**, according to Saint John, Mary remains the one to whom we can pray, honor, admire, and call **my mother, my sister, my friend... or simply Mary**. She will always be there to listen, console, guide and support us.



Your next visit to the Sanctuary

To discover the beauty of the Sanctuary in all its richness, let yourself be guided first toward the picnic area. Inside, four panels await you like travelling companions. They present the history of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes—its humble beginnings, its founding intuitions, and the way this place has become a true cathedral of greenery where prayer mingles with nature.



“Cathedral of Greenery”

—tells about the various structures which took shape over the years, like a landscape slowly sculpted by faith and patience.

“Places of Contemplation”

— an invitation to pause, to breathe, to meditate, to speak with Mary about what is in your heart.

“**Clothed in White**” — a “black-and-white” return to the early days of the Sanctuary, when efforts were guided by intuition, daring, and hope.

“**Pilgrims Through Time**” — a touching look at the men and women who, long before you, walked here, prayed here, hoped here.

After exploring these panels, to the left entrance of the picnic area: you will find a map showing all the important places within the Sanctuary. It will guide you through a complete, peaceful, and inspiring visit.

We wish you a beautiful discovery. And may your **visit with the Virgin Mary** inspire you to return, with a heart a little lighter and a little more open to God's grace.



It's never too early to think about next year !

If you are considering reserving a group pilgrimage for next year, it's a good idea to think about a date now. **Linda Rose**, our pilgrimage coordinator, will tentatively hold your date for next year and it's only when she contacts you next April that you must commit to either keep or cancel the date.



To reach Linda,
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