



LIFE ATHLETES - TEAM TALK 14

Topic: A Lourdes Day of Grace and Healing

Discussion Questions

Think about the elderly in your family, Church, and community, when was the last time you spoke with any of them? What did you talk about? What would you have liked to talk about?

What is the work that elderly people need to do?

-They need to look back and reflect upon their lives.

Why do you think a Lourdes Day of Grace and Healing is helpful in this regard?

-There are many answers that can be given, here are just a couple: the transcendent is acknowledged (God over us all); the five Rosary Meditations help us to look back upon our lives in union with a saint; the loving presence of our Heavenly Mother who comforts us; the challenge to purify ourselves to prepare ourselves for God; that God's word is solid and unchanging and therefore reliable in a fluid and corrupt world; that they are valuable and loved by God who awaits them at the end of their appointed days.

Watch Movie

Song of Bernadette (1943), starring Jennifer Jones

The Five Rosary Meditations:

1. The Boly Mill

Look at this house. It's not a palace but it certainly is not a shanty. It's a pretty decent place for someone who has worked hard. Two stories, multiple rooms, and close to work - not a bad place to call home.

But things changed. Bernadette's father's job as a miller was outsourced to a steam engine and things then went downhill for them. They couldn't afford to live in their house any longer, and they were forced to move into a one-room residence.

Things have change for us too. Like Bernadette's family, many of us have downsized and moved into one room. Nevertheless it is still home, but only for a time, until things change yet again.

2. The Baptismal Font

The original church where St. Bernadette was baptized was destroyed by fire. In the aftermath of this tragic change, only one thing was left standing - this large baptismal font.

Many of us have seen changes in our Church universal as well as our own parishes and family over the years. Buildings are changed or gone. People we once knew have left or moved. And yet what remains is the Faith of our Baptism, and our identity as God's sons and daughters.

3. The Cachot

Imagine Bernadette's entire family living in a single room where they all ate, slept, and lived literally on top of each other. It was miserable, small, damp and dirty. And from that miserable place, on February 11, 1858, St. Bernadette put on her shawl and walked out the door in search of firewood. And on this simple errand she met the Mother of the One who carried the *wood of the Cross* of our salvation.

God is *good* even when things are not great. It's alright to be sad when our hopes are disappointed, but do not despair. God is not disappointed with us. Our ultimate hope is eternal friendship with Him, and nothing else matter near as much as this.

4. The Grotto

There she is: a light in the darkness of a dirty rock; fairness amidst the decay of a garbage dump; Purity in a pigsty.

Mary, the smiling reflection of God's grace, shines in the most unlovely parts of life. To a place few would ever visit, she asked for processions. Where wood was rotting, she asked that a chapel be built. From the mud of Bernadette's washing, came a clear fountain of healing. In such a gloomy place, penance for poor sinners would lead to salvation of many and God's glory.

5. The Washing

The Lady in the Grotto told Bernadette: "I am the Immaculate Conception".

Mary is the solitary boast of our fallen race, and she points to her divine Son Jesus Christ who makes all things new again.

We are now going to have the opportunity to wash in holy water (Lourdes water if you have it). Let us obey Mary's instruction to wash with the intention to receive whatever it is that God wishes to give us.

