



# St. Bernadette

Bernadette was the eldest of nine children. Her family were very poor and her dad was a miller. She was very poor in health and contracted cholera, as well as suffering from Asthma and other ailments throughout her life.

## Key Information

- ◆ **Born** 7th January 1844, Lourdes, France
- ◆ **Died** 16th April 1879, Nevers
- ◆ **Canonised** 8th December 1933 by Pope Pius XI
- ◆ **Feast Day** 16th April



At the age of 14 she had a series of visions of the Virgin Mary which occurred between 11th February and 16th July, 1858, near to Massabielle. Bernadette said that Mary revealed her identity with the words "I am the Immaculate Conception" and, among other messages and affirmations, Mary told Bernadette that a chapel should be built there. Bernadette stood firm in her insistence that these visions were genuine despite being disbelieved by her parents, clergy and authorities -faithfully passing on Mary's messages.

She became a border in the local school run by the Sisters of Charity of Nevers and in 1866 she was permitted to join the novitiate in the motherhouse in Nevers where she completed her religious instruction.

She was well loved and said to be full of kindness and holiness even though she was in constant pain. She died willingly accepting her sufferings to fulfil her "Lady's" request for penance.

Bernadette was canonised by Pope Pius XI in 1933. He authenticated her visions and the veneration of Mary as Our Lady of Lourdes.

St Bernadette's body is held in the chapel of the St Gildard convent, Nevers.

