

Mary Visits Her Children

At various times in history Our Blessed Mother has appeared on earth to certain people. She does this to make our faith stronger or to give us a special message from God. These visions are not an essential part of our faith in the way that the beliefs of our Creed are. But they are good to know about, and they can help us to love Jesus and Mary more. Here are some appearances of Our Lady you should know about:

Our Lady of Guadalupe: In the year 1531, the Blessed Mother appeared to a man in Mexico. Juan Diego was an Indian who had become a Christian only a short while before. By appearing to him Our Lady showed her special love for the Indian people of the New World. When Juan Diego went to tell his bishop what had happened, a picture of Our Lady miraculously appeared on his coat. This miraculous picture can still be seen in the church of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico.

Our Lady of Lourdes: In 1858, Mary appeared eighteen times to a fourteen year old girl, Bernadette Soubirous, near Lourdes, France. At the last apparition the Blessed Mother revealed her identity to Bernadette by saying, "I am the Immaculate Conception". This apparition of Mary was important because four years previously, in 1854, the Church had defined as a dogma the truth of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, that is, that Mary was conceived without original sin. Bernadette was canonized a saint in 1933.

Our Lady of Fatima: In 1917, three children in Fatima, Portugal, began having monthly visits from Mary. The Blessed Mother asked them to say the Rosary every day for world peace and to make sacrifices for sinners. The last time Our Lady visited the children, God gave a sign to show the people who came that the children were not lying. That day seventy thousand people saw the sun spin and fall toward the earth, then stop and return to its normal position.

The message of Fatima is important for us today. Mary promised that if enough people say the Rosary and make sacrifices, the world would be saved from war. Would you join in the peace plan from Heaven?