Video: Saint Bernadette Soubirous

Length: 8 minutes, 37 seconds

Target Audience: Grades 6 - 10

A Loyola Productions Presentation from the video series: Who Cares About the Saints?

Narrator: Father James Martin, SJ

Objective:
Through watching the video St. Bernadette Soubirous, students will learn about the central events of St. Bernadette’s life and understand that when we feel God is asking us to do something, we should remain true to His will; and, as Bernadette did, we should hold on to our faith in Him even if others make fun of us.

Overview of the video:

Bernadette Soubirous and her family lived in extreme poverty. One day when Bernadette was collecting wood at a grotto near her home, she felt a presence close to her and saw a young woman. From that moment Bernadette’s life was forever changed. Bernadette was young, she was uneducated; no one believed her story of seeing a young woman who asked her to return to the grotto for the next 15 days. But St. Bernadette had faith, and following the Lady’s instructions discovered a spring near the grotto. As local people came to the grotto and began to have their crippled limbs restored, St. Bernadette’s reports of her experiences became more accepted. But St. Bernadette’s life did not become easier. Her explanations were challenged, her faith was questioned. Throughout it all, St. Bernadette maintained her faith in God and the Lady of Lourdes, never wavering in her trust and devotion.

Resources for planning your lesson:

Biography:
Additional information about St. Bernadette Soubirous can be found at - http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=1757
Video:
“Father Barron visits Lourdes: Mary, the Immaculate Conception”
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dwx8g8z7FUo

Word Search:
At the end of this guide

YOUR LESSON

Leading or Essential Question:
Read the following quotation to the class and have students reflect on what it means.

Opening quotation:

"Love overcomes, love delights.
Those who love the Sacred Heart rejoice.”

St. Bernadette Soubirous (1844-1879)

Why might St. Bernadette have felt so strongly about the ability of love to make things more joyful? What difficulties did she encounter in her young life that might have been easier to bear because her love for the Sacred Heart?

POST VIDEO DISCUSSIONS

1) Father Martin feels that although people originally ridiculed Bernadette and laughed at her stories of a Lady at the grotto, St. Bernadette’s character eventually made those same people believe she was visited by the woman who said her name was the Immaculate Conception.
On one side of the board, list the things about St. Bernadette’s appearance and life that led people, at first, to think she was just a crazy girl making up stories.
On the other side of the board, list the qualities of Bernadette’s character that would make people come to believe, over time, that Our Lady of Lourdes did appear to Bernadette.
What can we learn from St. Bernadette’s life about the difference between our first impressions of people based on their appearance and our eventual understanding of their character?
2) The Lady who appears to St. Bernadette in the grotto at Lourdes tells Bernadette she cannot promise her “happiness in this world, but in the next.” Is that the kind of promise that would appeal to a teenager? Why – or why not? List the ways in which the Lady’s visits actually caused unhappiness for St. Bernadette in her daily life.

3) What does Father Martin say young people in particular should “get” from St. Bernadette? (i.e., keep true to your vision, hold on to your Faith even when people make fun of you.) Since our chances of seeing the Blessed Mother in a park today seem limited, what might keeping true to your vision, holding on to your Faith even when people make fun of you for your beliefs look like today? Have you experienced – or seen others experience – joking, insults, bullying over faith-related situations? Describe what happened.

POST VIDEO ASSIGNMENTS
Use one of the following for written reflection:

1) The video is filled with beautiful pieces of art that show images of St. Bernadette’s life. Think about one piece that you were impressed with/remember. Describe the artwork and explain what it showed you about the life/ministry of St. Bernadette.

2) “For those who believe in God, no explanation is necessary. For those who do not believe in God, no explanation is possible.”

These lines from the movie The Song of Bernadette seem to sum up the essence of the shrine at Lourdes in France. From the muddy ground that became a spring in front of St. Bernadette’s eyes to the enormous place of worship at the shrine of Lourdes today, Our Lady of Lourdes has become a symbol of healing for the millions who have faith in her and her Son. Write about Faith – what it means to you, how it motivates so many people, how others do nothing but make fun of it. Use St. Bernadette and the shrine to Our Lady of Lourdes as your reference points.

WRAPPING IT ALL UP

Watch the short video at the link below: “Father Barron visits Lourdes: Mary, the Immaculate Conception” - approximately 5 minutes. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dwx8g8z7FUo
Discuss how hope for the intercession of Mary, our Lady of Lourdes, and the enormous longing for healing among the ill of the world have transformed the little grotto St. Bernadette Soubirous visited for 15 days at her Lady’s request into the enormous shrine Lourdes is today. Does the commercial aspect of the Shrine affect your feelings/thoughts about the religious devotion St. Bernadette showed as a young girl who kept faith in her vision when she was ridiculed by everyone around her?

Prayer:
Honor St. Bernadette Soubirous by praying:

O God, protector and lover of the humble, You bestowed on your servant, Bernadette, the favor of the vision of Our Lady, the Immaculate Virgin Mary, and of speech with her. Grant that we may deserve to behold You in Heaven. Amen.

http://www.2heartsnetwork.org/Bernadette.htm

WHEN YOU GO HOME

Talk to your family about what you have learned about St. Bernadette Soubirous, especially how young she was when her experiences with Our Lady of Lourdes began. Tell them how she was made fun of by everyone around her including her own family, but she kept true to her vision of the Lady in spite of the ridicule she suffered. Try to find a copy of the movie The Song of Bernadette. Perhaps your library has one, your school or church – or there is always your local video store or YouTube. Watch the movie with your family. Does the woman who portrays Bernadette capture the qualities you expected to see in the young girl? How do you and your family feel about the portrayal of Bernadette’s faith in the Lady?

(The movie itself is long – slightly over 2 hours, thirty minutes. Most of the 10:00 minute clips on YouTube show only bits of Bernadette’s life before the visits from the Lady.)

GOT TIME?

There’s a Word Search on the next page!
SAINT BERNADETTE SOUBIROUS

Bernadette
Character
Faith
Healing
Lourdes

Miracles
Pilgrimage
Song
Springs
Visions

Created at: www.puzzle-maker.com