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Dear Friends

Despite all the persistent rain life has gone on. We have been relatively lucky in Blackburn and have escaped the worst of the rain and subsequent flooding. It must be a terrible thing to have your home flooded and the poor people on the Somerset levels must be thinking of joining Noah after the last seven weeks. Prayers for all those people affected. Prayers also for all people and families affected by illness for it can be a most trying time.

**MARIST PILGRIMAGES** All the necessary arrangements have been implemented to comply with the recent regulations regarding pilgrimages. Our booking now makes it absolutely clear that we are agents of Tangney Tours and bookings are now handled by them.

**38<sup>th</sup> MARIST LOURDES PILGRIMAGE** Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> / 31<sup>st</sup> May. Travel by coach and ferry. Includes 5 nights full board accommodation plus one extra meal; en-suite twin bedded rooms; travel insurance. Cost: Hotel Esplanade £410.00; Hotel Padoue £550.00. Booking forms available.

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> / Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September an interesting 'Holy Holiday' during which we will stop one night in Reims, four nights in Lyon, when we will be able to visit the city itself, some places of Marist interest and Ars and Chatillon-sur-Chalaronne, where St Vincent de Paul worked. On our journey north we would stay in Lisieux for two nights and follow in the footsteps of St Therese. Details have to be finalised but we will be using the P.O. Dover / Calais ferry. Booking forms available by next month.

*Marist Liturgical Calendar and Mass Intentions 2014*

Date	Feast or Celebration	Mass Intention
Feb 11 <sup>th</sup>	Our Lady of Lourdes	
Feb 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Chair of St Peter	
Feb 28 <sup>th</sup>	Approbation of SM Constitutions 1873	Society of Mary

M. Coleman SM, Marist Way Regional Animator

*A reading from a letter of St Mary Bernadette Soubirous  
P. Gondrand, 1861*

*One day, when I had gone with the two girls to collect wood by the bank of the river Gave, I heard a sound. I turned toward the meadow and saw that the trees were not moving at all. I looked up and saw a grotto. And I saw a Lady wearing a white dress with a blue sash. On each foot she had a yellow rose; her rosary was the same colour.*

*When I saw her I rubbed my eyes. I thought I must be mistaken. I put my hands in my pocket, where I kept my rosary. I wanted to make the sign of the cross, but I could not lift my hand to my forehead; it fell back. Then the Lady crossed herself. I again tried, and although my hand was trembling, I was eventually able to make the sign of the cross. I began to say the rosary. The Lady slipped the beads of her rosary through her fingers, but she did not move her lips. When I finished the rosary, she immediately disappeared.*

- *I asked the two girls if they had seen anything. They said, "No", and asked what I had to tell them. I told them that I had seen a Lady wearing a white dress but that I did not know who she was. But I warned them to keep silent about it. Then they urged me not to go back there, but I refused. I went back on Sunday, feeling drawn by an inner force.*
- *The Lady spoke to me a third time and asked me if I was willing to come to her over a period of a fortnight. I replied that I was. She added that I must tell the priest to have a chapel built there. Then she told me to drink at the spring. Not seeing any spring I was going to drink from the Gave. She told me she did not mean that, and pointed with her finger to the spring. When I went there I saw only a little dirty water. I put my hand in it, but I could not get hold of any. I scratched, and at last a little water came for drinking. Three times I threw it away; the fourth time I was able to drink it. Then the vision disappeared, and I went away.*

*I went back there for fifteen days, and each day the Lady appeared to me, with the exception of a Monday and a Friday. She reminded me again to tell the priests to build the chapel, asked me to wash in the spring, and to pray for the conversion of sinners. I asked her several times who she was, but she gently smiled at me. Finally, she held her arms outstretched and raised her eyes to heaven and told me that she was the Immaculate Conception.*