A Paralyzed Nun Walks Again: The 70th "Miracle" of Lourdes



For centuries, Lourdes has been a renowned pilgrimage site for millions of believers worldwide. Nestled in the French Pyrenees, this Marian sanctuary is famous for accounts of **unexplained healings**. In 2018, another extraordinary event was officially recognized: the healing of Sister Bernadette Moriau, a nun who, after over 50 years of partial paralysis, began walking again. Her recovery was declared the 70th "miracle" officially recognized by the Catholic Church at Lourdes.

Decades of Suffering

Sister Bernadette Moriau, born in 1939, lived a life devoted to her faith and religious service until she was struck in 1966 by a severe condition affecting her lumbar roots. This neurological disorder, known for causing chronic pain and significant functional limitations, progressively confined her to a wheelchair and required her to wear a rigid back brace. Despite multiple surgeries and medical treatments, her condition showed no signs of improvement.

Through it all, Sister Bernadette maintained unwavering faith. In 2008, at her doctor’s recommendation, she undertook a pilgrimage to Lourdes—not seeking a cure, but hoping for spiritual comfort.

A Life-Changing Experience

During her pilgrimage, Sister Bernadette participated in a Mass for the sick, where she described feeling profound inner peace and a warm sensation throughout her body. However, it was only after returning to her religious community in northern France that she noticed an extraordinary change.

On July 11, 2008, while praying in her room, she felt an inner call to remove her back brace and abandon her medical aids. For the first time in decades, she was able to walk unaided and pain-free.

Official Recognition

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Sister Bernadette's sudden and complete recovery immediately drew the attention of her medical team. An in-depth investigation was launched, involving around 50 specialists, including neurologists, surgeons, and radiologists. The goal was to examine the event's scientific and medical basis. After a decade of rigorous analysis, experts concluded that her healing was medically inexplicable.

In February 2018, Bishop Jacques Benoit-Gonnin of Beauvais officially declared Sister Bernadette Moriau’s recovery a miracle. This marked the 70th officially recognized miracle since the Marian apparitions of 1858.

The Meaning of a Miracle

For the Catholic Church, a miracle is not merely an extraordinary healing but a sign of divine intervention. Stories like Sister Bernadette’s encourage reflection on faith, suffering, and hope.

This 70th miracle of Lourdes underscores the sanctuary’s significance for believers. Each year, approximately six million pilgrims visit Lourdes to pray, seek peace, or hope for healing. For Sister Bernadette, her recovery strengthened her mission: to bear witness to the power of faith and divine love.

Sources

- fr.wikipedia.org

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