

### Introduction.

On the 11th of February, 1858, at Lourdes, in the  
French Pyrenees, a young girl named Bernadette Soubirous,  
then about 14 years old, was walking with her mother and  
two sisters along the bank of the river Gave de Pau.  
She had been sent by her mother to gather firewood.  
As she walked along, she saw a small pool of water  
in the middle of the stream. She stopped to look at it  
and said to herself, "It is very clear." As she  
was looking at the water, she saw a small white  
hand coming out of the water. It belonged to a  
little girl who was kneeling on the bank of the river.  
The girl said to Bernadette, "Come and see me  
again tomorrow at the same time." Bernadette  
was very frightened and ran home to tell her mother.  
Her mother told her to go back to the pool and  
see if the girl was still there. Bernadette did so  
and found the girl again. The girl said to her,  
"I am the Immaculate Conception, the Virgin Mary.  
I have come to tell you that you will help many  
people. You must tell everyone about me."

### I. Lourdes, etc

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### II. First Apparition

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