DRAFT*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*DRAFT

RELICS OF SAINT BERNADETTE TO VISIT OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH IN PITTSFIELD DURING PARISH'S CENTENNIAL YEAR

Historic October 28–29 pilgrimage will unite the parish's 100th anniversary celebration with the message of prayer, healing and hope entrusted to Saint Bernadette at Lourdes

PITTSFIELD, New Hampshire — Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Pittsfield will welcome the relics of Saint Bernadette Soubirous on **Wednesday, October 28, and Thursday, October 29, 2026**, as part of the **2026–2027 St. Bernadette Relics Tour – Journey of Grace**.

The visit will hold special significance for the parish as it celebrates its **100th anniversary in 2026**, marking a century of faith, family and service to the Pittsfield community.

The relics will travel from the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes in France as part of a national pilgrimage to Catholic churches, cathedrals, shrines, universities, seminaries, schools, hospitals and other faith communities throughout the United States.

During the Pittsfield visit, pilgrims will be invited to encounter the message of Lourdes through prayer, public veneration of the relics, Eucharistic celebrations and other devotional opportunities. A detailed schedule of Masses, veneration hours and special events will be announced by the parish.

"This visit is an extraordinary blessing for Our Lady of Lourdes Church during our centennial year," said **Father John B. MacKenzie, pastor**. "As we give thanks for 100 years of faith in Pittsfield, the presence of Saint Bernadette's relics will unite our parish's history with the place and spiritual message for which our church is named."

Toni's note: The quotation above is proposed language and Father John, you need to insert your thought here!.

A century of faith in Pittsfield

Our Lady of Lourdes Church is celebrating its centennial under the theme **"A Century of Faith, Family, and Community."** For generations, parishioners have gathered in Pittsfield to receive the sacraments, pray together and serve their neighbors under the loving intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The visit of Saint Bernadette's relics will be among the most significant events of the parish's anniversary year, connecting the local community directly with the Sanctuary of Lourdes and its universal mission of prayer, welcome, compassion and service to the sick.

Pittsfield previously welcomed the relics during the 2022 United States tour. That visit included Masses, presentations, processions and opportunities for prayer, drawing clergy, religious and pilgrims to the parish. Father MacKenzie later described the experience as a joyful occasion that brought the community together in faith. (St. Bernadette USA)

The message of Lourdes

In 1858, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared 18 times to 14-year-old Bernadette Soubirous near the Grotto of Massabielle in Lourdes, France. Through the humility and faith of Saint Bernadette, the message of Lourdes continues to call people to prayer, penance, conversion, compassion and trust in God.

Lourdes has since become one of the world's foremost Catholic pilgrimage destinations and one of the most significant places of pilgrimage for those who are sick or suffering. Millions of pilgrims travel to the Sanctuary each year seeking reconciliation, spiritual renewal, healing and a deeper encounter with Jesus Christ.

The 2026–2027 pilgrimage builds upon the response to the first national United States tour of Saint Bernadette's relics in 2022. The new tour seeks to bring the grace and spiritual mission of Lourdes closer to those who may never be able to travel to France.

Throughout the national journey, pilgrims will have opportunities for veneration of the relics, Eucharistic celebrations, Marian devotions, prayer for the sick, catechesis and encounters with organizations that continue the mission of Lourdes through pilgrimage, hospitality and service.

The tour is being organized by the **Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes** in collaboration with Catholic partners in the United States, including the **Order of Malta** and **Our Lady of Lourdes Hospitality North American Volunteers**.

Event information

St. Bernadette Relics Tour – Journey of Grace
Our Lady of Lourdes Church
20 River Road
Pittsfield, NH 03263

Wednesday, October 28, 2026
Thursday, October 29, 2026

The complete schedule of Masses, public veneration and devotional events will be announced as details are finalized.

For local parish information:

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For national tour and media information:

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About Our Lady of Lourdes Church

Our Lady of Lourdes Church serves the Catholic community of Pittsfield, New Hampshire, together with St. Joseph Mission Church in Northwood. In 2026, the parish is celebrating its centennial anniversary under the theme **"A Century of Faith, Family, and Community."** Through worship, sacramental life, religious education, charitable outreach and community service, the parish continues the Catholic mission that has sustained generations of faithful in the Pittsfield area.

Please review this statement, as well, and edit.

About the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes

The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes is one of the world's foremost Catholic pilgrimage destinations and one of the most significant places of pilgrimage for the sick. Between February 11 and July 16, 1858, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared 18 times to 14-year-old Saint Bernadette Soubirous in Lourdes, France, entrusting her with a message of prayer, penance and hope that continues to inspire millions around the world.

Through its mission of welcome, hospitality, prayer and evangelization, the Sanctuary continues to proclaim the Gospel and the enduring message entrusted to Saint Bernadette.

About the St. Bernadette Relics Tour – Journey of Grace

The St. Bernadette Relics Tour – Journey of Grace is a national pilgrimage organized by the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes in France. From September 2026 through August 2027, the relics of Saint Bernadette will visit Catholic churches, cathedrals, basilicas, shrines, seminaries, universities, hospitals, schools and other faith communities throughout the United States.

Inspired by the apparitions of Our Lady of Lourdes and the witness of Saint Bernadette, the pilgrimage seeks to bring a message of faith, healing, hope and spiritual renewal to communities across the nation.