

July 27, 2023



Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES

Image by Christine Sponchia from Pixabay

A PILGRIM'S DISPATCH: BEING THERE II

By Julie Mussché

Maxim 61

“Strive also wholeheartedly after the peaceful and intimate union with God, very cordial charity and forbearance towards the neighbor...”

FR. JEAN-PIERRE MEDAILLE, S.J.

Reflection

Before we move to the next day, just a few more moments with Day 7. Visiting and sampling the wares at the Town Market was great fun. A couple of us picked up items to share at dinner that evening. The merchants were so gracious and hospitable, making all of us feel welcomed and cared for. We also encountered St. Jean Francois Regis, S.J., in story and in visitation to the church where he served in Le Puy. St. Jean Francois was instrumental in introducing poor women, many of them prostitutes, to the art and craft of

lacemaking, an alternative means of support. The rest, as they say, is history, as lacemaking continues in Le Puy.

Day 8 was a retreat day and it included Mass at the Basilica. It was a beautiful liturgy, albeit a bit melancholy as this would be our last worship as a pilgrimage community in Le Puy. Following another hearty lunch after services, a group of us decided on an outing to the Basilica of St. Joseph, Our Good Hope. It is located in Espaly-Saint Marcel, several miles north of Le Puy. Our steadfast band made way through hereto unknown parts. The walk seemed relatively effortless compared with other comparable adventures and altogether it seemed appropriate that we should drop by to say “hi” to St. Joseph prior to exiting town.

Although elevated on top of a puy (a hill of volcanic origin), the almost 50-foot statue of St. Joseph was not nearly as difficult to access as Notre-Dame or Saint-Michel. Nonetheless, ascending still offered a bit of a challenge and the views afforded were magnificent. The statue, sitting atop an ancient fortress, depicts Joseph in his workshop holding the toddler Jesus perched on his work bench; Joseph's arm protectively supports him. A loving husband and father, Joseph is looking across the valley toward the statue of Our Lady, Notre-Dame De France.

We entered the chapel, which is literally built into a volcanic rock cavern that was once occupied by a castle chapel. We spent some time being with the simple beauty and quiet of the sacred place, a resonance of the essence of St. Joseph. After about an hour, we headed back down and toward our temporary home to celebrate our time and final evening in Le Puy. Blessed be.



St. Jean Francois Regis
Photo by Julie Mussché

For Pondering

- When you consider and reflect on the life of St. Joseph, what virtues emerge for you?
 - Which of these do you desire to emulate?
-



For Prayer

Prayer to St Joseph

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.
Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage,
and defend us from every evil.
Amen.*

POPE FRANCIS, PATRIS CORDE

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