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Feb. 11, Our Lady of Lourdes

Gerelyn Hollingsworth | Feb. 11, 2010 NCR Today

"Que soy era Immaculada Concepciou."

"Four years after the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception by Blessed Pius IX, Mary appeared for the first time on February 11, 1858 to St. Bernadette Soubirous in the grotto at Massabielle. After successive apparitions accompanied by extraordinary events, the Holy Virgin revealed to the young visionary in the local language, ?I am the Immaculate Conception.??

--Pope Benedict XVI, Feb. 10, 2008

On the Pope's [1]http://popebenedictxviblog.blogspot.com/> blog, scroll down to Monday, Feb. 8: "The former head of the Lourdes Medical Bureau is affirming that all people can receive a cure at Our Lady's shrine if they pray and hope for it with perseverance.

"Doctor Patrick Theillier, who retired from leadership of the bureau last year, stated this in an interview with France Catholique.

"The cure, he explained, 'might not be as spectacular as to be considered a miracle.'

"However, the physician added, it can affect 'in a profound and lasting way the person who experiences it, in all his being, body, soul and spirit.'"

For the latest scholarship on Our Lady of Lourdes, [2] see *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in the Secular Age*, [3] by Ruth Harris, a Fellow and Tutor in Modern History at New College, [4] Oxford. Published by Penguin, 2000.

On the back cover, Eamon Duffy calls Harris's "stunning history" "gripping, and humane"; and Karen Armstrong calls it "scholarly, impeccably researched, and compulsively readable".

In his own book, *Lourdes Diary: Seven Days at the Grotto of Massabieille*, [5], Loyola Press, 2006, James Martin, SJ, says he was "captivated" by Harris's book. He considers it the "best and most scholarly" on Lourdes.

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