

Although Bishop Pavy laid the cornerstone for the church in 1858, promising the monks, "You made her the guardian of your monastery, I want to make her the Queen of Africa", the shrine became widely known through Cardinal Charles Lavigerie, the founder of both the Missionaries of Africa and the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa. In 1872 Lavigerie was travelling from Algiers to Rome in the company of a great number of soldiers, priests and a Trappist abbot, when a fierce storm threatened to sink their ship. The bishop promised Mary that if the lives of those on board were spared, he would make a thanksgiving pilgrimage to her shrine.

In 1873 Lavigerie completed and consecrated the church that would become the basilica of "Our Lady of Africa, Consolation of the Afflicted" and would be the permanent home of the statue, now dressed in an exquisitely embroidered white gown and blue mantle. The basilica soon became an important place of pilgrimage.

### WATCHING OVER AFRICA

The basilica of Our Lady of Africa overlooks the Bay of Algiers and the Straits of Gibraltar, which separate Africa and Europe. In Gibraltar, the shrine of Our Lady of Europe places the continent in Mary's care just as Our Lady of Africa watches over Africa.

Today, the shrine of Our Lady of Africa is in the care of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa, who, along with their brothers, the Missionaries of Africa, have done so much for the people of Africa. Perhaps as never before, the people of all faiths and nationalities within the continent need their Mother's love and care.

### Mass text

#### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

**Look to your covenant, O Lord, and forget not the life of your poor ones for ever.**

**Arise, O God, and defend your cause, and forget not the cries of those who seek you.**

FIRST READING **Wisdom 18:6-9**

PSALM **Psalm 32**

RESPONSE **Happy are the people the Lord has chosen as his own.**

1. Ring out your joy to the Lord, O you just; for praise is fitting for loyal hearts. They are happy, whose God is the Lord, the people he has chosen as his own. **R.**
2. The Lord looks on those who revere him, on those who hope in his love, to rescue their souls from death, to keep them alive in famine. **R.**

3. Our soul is waiting for the Lord. The Lord is our help and our shield. May your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in you. **R.**

SECOND READING **Hebrews 11:1-2. 8-19**

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia, alleluia! Stay awake and stand ready, because you do not know the hour when the Son of Man is coming. Alleluia!**

GOSPEL **Luke 12:32-48**

#### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord, who gives you your fill of finest wheat.**

#### Next Sunday's Readings:

Apocalypse 11:19; 12:1-6. 10  
1 Corinthians 15:20-26  
Luke 1:39-56



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# SUNDAY BULLETIN



## OUR LADY OF AFRICA, MOTHER OF ALL HER CHILDREN

An African mother carries her child on her back in good times and in bad. Wherever a mother goes, so does her child. When a child suffers, so does the mother. A mother will go to extraordinary lengths to ensure her child's happiness, health, safety and future. That is why one billion people of 53 countries, speaking several hundred languages, within a land mass of 11,725,385 square miles and a coastline of 16,000 miles, share one important ideal: that of motherhood. It is therefore no surprise that Africa has a great love for Mary, the mother of Jesus, who personifies everything that can be said of a mother.

### COMMON LINK

Just as a mother will bring together her squabbling children, encouraging them to make peace with each other, so, in Africa, Mary is the common link between Christian and Muslim, her Immaculate Conception venerated even within the pages of the Koran.

Our Lady of Africa stands in Algiers, often called "the Gateway to Africa" and where Christianity's history and love for Mary date back to the second century. In the basilica dedicated to Our Lady of Africa, Christians and Muslims mingle freely, approaching Mary as the mother who understands what it means to be a woman and a mother. An inscription above the main altar reads, "Our Lady of Africa, pray for us and for all Muslims."

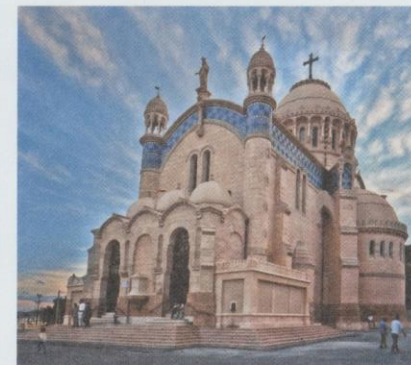
The modern shrine dates back to an ancient, tiny shrine of Our Lady, decorated with seashells, which fishermen, Barbary robbers and pirates would visit, praying for safe voyages.

After the French conquered Algeria in the nineteenth century, the first Bishop of Algiers, Antoine-Adolph Dupuch, found the tiny Christian community overwhelmingly outnumbered and surrounded by Muslims. He wanted to bring together the two great religions in peace. Visiting Lyons in France, he found the perfect solution in the form of a bronze, dark-skinned statue of the Immaculate Conception. Bishop Dupuch's next problem was where to put it, because he had no church. With only a few months to live himself, he asked the local Trappist monks to look after the image until his successors could build a church. They placed it above the door and engraved below it the Latin words *Posuerunt me custodem* ("they have installed me as their guardian").

## Shrines of Our Lady



Sr Janet Fearn FMDM revisits a selection of Marian shrines from around the world.



7 AUGUST 2022

19TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

YEAR C

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK III