

## St. Anne

July 26, 2026

Our grandmothers occupy a unique place in our hearts and in our memories, and, for many of us, next to God, “we owe our faith principally to our mothers and grandmothers.”<sup>1</sup> July 26 is the feast of St. Anne, The Mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This “is the official title which the liturgy bestows on St. Anne: this too is her greatest claim to greatness. Accordingly the feast is not primarily in honor of a saint but one commemorating the work of redemption, a feast in honor of our Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pius Parsch, *The Church's Year of Grace*, vol. 4, 270.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

St. Anne is the grandmother of our Lord according to the flesh. Yet, sacred scripture makes no mention of her, or even gives us her name. The *Protoevangelium of James* from the second century is the earliest source of information we have about the just couple, Joachim and Anne. “They were wealthy and generous, and they divided their annual income into three portions, the first going to the poor, the second to the temple, while the third was kept for their own needs. One great sorrow weighed heavily-they were denied the blessing of children, although they had petitioned to God incessantly for years. Scorn and contempt were Anne's portion from acquaintances, while Joachim, upon bringing his offering to the temple, was cast out publicly as one barred from

divine favor. With heavy heart, he betook himself to solitude and unburdened his plight to God. An answer came in the message of an angel: “Thy prayer is heard, Joachim. A daughter shall be born to thee and thou shalt give her the name Mary; she shall be dedicated to the Lord from childhood and be filled with the Holy Spirit. At the same hour Anne was granted a similar vision. Both hurried to the temple to thank God, and beaming with joy, entered the golden portals of the sanctuary.”<sup>3</sup>

One profound truth illustrated by this account is “great men must mature in the school of suffering and that everyone who shares in the work of redemption must be a bearer of the Cross.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

In the Communion of Saints, we are not dealing with abstractions but real people who are alive and intercede on our behalf. This was vividly described by His Excellency, The Most Rev. Guy Desrochers, the Bishop of Pembroke, Ontario, during a homily he gave at a shrine of St. Anne back in 2023: “I know that many of you have come here today to ask for a special favour, for a healing, or even for a miracle. ...Saint Anne...simply turns to her grandson Jesus and begs him to grant a particular grace or divine favour to the person who invokes her in faith and who believes that her intercession is extremely powerful. So, why is Saint Anne’s intercession so powerful? And why is she invoked all over the world by people of faith, by people who suffer or who are praying

for a special favour for themselves or for their loved ones? And why do so many faithful throughout the centuries still call her: “Good Saint Anne”? The reason is simple: it is because of her unfathomable love for her grandson Jesus. Like most grandmothers, she undoubtedly loved him dearly and probably spoiled him from time to time. And of course, you can imagine that Jesus also loved her with every fiber of his being, as most grandchildren usually do and feel about their grandparents. That is why Jesus never refuses anything that is dear to his grandmother’s heart. When Saint Anne asks him to favour someone in need, he simply cannot refuse and grants the cure, the grace or miracle.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <https://pembrokediocese.com/article/homily-for-the-feast-of-saint-anne-in-cormac/>  
Accessed July 24, 2026.

The Bishop then continued to recount miracles attributed to Good Saint Anne in great detail. If you visit the shrine of St. Anne de Beaupre in Quebec, you will see that over the years, the basilica's entrance columns have been adorned with hundreds of abandoned crutches, canes, and braces left by individuals who attributed their recoveries to the intercession of Saint Anne. Twenty four years ago today, July 26, 2002, I visited the Shrine of St. Anne de Beaupre. I was in the Dominican Order at the time and had been taking a French course that summer. A year and nine months earlier, I had had a "routine" hernia operation that went terribly wrong and resulted in internal bleeding. After that time I was in chronic, daily pain. I recall going to confession and attending Mass at

the Shrine, and that evening I participated in the candlelight procession for the feast. I didn't feel anything dramatic, but after that event, I realized that I had been healed. The cure was instantaneous, complete, and lasting. I have never spoken publicly of this before. As some of you know, I was to have further health difficulties that resulted in my taking a medical leave of absence for several years. I remember during those desolate times, purchasing a statute of St. Anne de Beaupre and spending much in time in prayer before that image asking for help again. In time, the chronic pain I was experiencing disappeared again! This time it was gradual, but the healing perdured. In 2020, I received a call asking if I were well enough to go to St. Ann's parish in Charlotte,

where St. Anne de Beaupre hangs in the rectory kitchen, looking at me every day. Thank you, Good Saint Anne!

The Bishop of Pembroke concluded his homily by saying, “Dear pilgrims here present...on this Feast Day of Saint Anne, the beloved grandmother of Jesus, I encourage you to have faith in the powerful intercession of Saint Anne. “Ask and you shall receive”, says the Lord in his Gospel. Ask in faith and promise Saint Anne that you will honor her in some way if you receive the special grace, the healing or miracle that you desire deep within you and that you will now present as an offering to her motherly and loving heart during this Mass. Do not despair if your petition is not heard immediately. God is putting you to the test sometimes, to see how much faith



you truly have. Your patience, your perseverance and your persistence in asking for your special favour through the intercession of Saint Anne – as long as it is God’s will and for his greater glory – will be granted to you sooner or later. Ask God to give you the faith of the centurion who said to the Lord: “I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed.”<sup>6</sup> Good Saint Anne, pray for us.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.