

WHAT IS A PILGRIMAGE?

A Pilgrimage is a personal invitation from God, comprised of his offer and dependent on the acceptance of the pilgrim. A pilgrimage is a spiritual journey to a holy, sacred place undertaken with religious motives to usher the pilgrim into the presence of God. It always requires leaving one's own environment and daily routine and setting out with a particular spiritual purpose. To go on a pilgrimage is to search for God.

The pilgrimage practice is rooted in Judaic tradition and the journey to Jerusalem. "I rejoiced because they said to me, 'We will go up to the house of the Lord.' And now we have set foot within your gates, O Jerusalem. ... To it the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord. ... to give thanks to the name of the Lord." (Psalm 122:1-4).

In the early days of Christianity, the faithful continued this tradition, eagerly journeying to the Holy Land to visit and pray at those places associated with the life of Christ. People embark on a pilgrimage for a variety of reasons. Some seek to renew their relationship with God, while others offer praise and thanksgiving to Him for special favors and graces received. Most often, however, pilgrimages are made to seek forgiveness for sins or to ask for special favors.

On October 8, November 19, and December 10 the Church of St. Therese invites you on pilgrimage to St. Clare of Assisi Retreat Center in Hampton VA, designated a pilgrimage site by Bishop Barry C. Knestout in this Extraordinary Jubilee Year.

The opportunity of pilgrimage offers pilgrims a way to discover the supernatural power of God, to enrich one's life of faith, to strengthen the bond of love and friendship with family and community and to experience the healing power of Jesus Christ. The prayerful and meditational spirit of the journey is an excellent preparation to encounter God in everyday living long after the pilgrimage is completed. In

this environment, the grace of God is present in a special way that allows the person to experience conversion and a change of heart.

WHO WILL LEAD THIS PARISH PILGRIMAGE?

This pilgrimage will be led by Fr. Rolo B. Castillo. Assisting with preparation and logistics is Tony Traficante.

HOW IS THIS PARISH PILGRIMAGE CONNECTED TO THE EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE YEAR?

This pilgrimage is our response to the Extraordinary Jubilee, as announced by Our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, which runs from 10 January 2026 to 10 January 2027 in observance of the 800th Anniversary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi, who died on 3 October 1226. Immediately following the Jubilee Year of Hope, the Jubilee Year of St. Francis invites all pilgrims to transform their hope into action, following the example of St. Francis of Assisi to become models of holiness of life and constant witnesses of peace.

HOW TO RECEIVE A PLENARY INDULGENCE

On the 800th anniversary of the passing of St. Francis into eternal life, Pope Leo XIV is offering Catholics an extraordinary opportunity to seek God's grace in a powerful way. Inspired by the "Pardon of Assisi" granted by Pope Honorius III to St. Francis, a plenary indulgence will be granted to all faithful who make a pilgrimage to any Franciscan conventual church or place of worship dedicated to St. Francis in any part of the world and complete the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion, and prayer for the Holy Father's intentions).

If you are unable to undertake a pilgrimage, the plenary indulgence will be granted to you if you spiritually join the Jubilee celebrations and offer your prayers, pains, or sufferings to God.

WHEN DOES THE PILGRIMAGE BEGIN AND END?

The pilgrimage schedule begins at 10:00 AM with the arrival of pilgrims at the Retreat Center. The exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel invites us to private prayer and Eucharistic Adoration. The Sacrament of Penance will be available then as well. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be celebrated by Fr. Rolo at 1:00 PM, and we will be on our way home by 2:00 PM.

IS THERE A COST TO ATTEND?

While there is no cost to attend and participate in the pilgrimage, you will need to provide your own transportation to and from the Retreat Center. Lunch will be served in the Retreat Center Dining Hall at the cost of \$10 per person. We will take up a collection at Mass and that offering is given to the Retreat Center to assist them with their ministry of offering people a place of prayer and a richness in Catholic culture.

IS PARKING AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO MAY WANT TO DRIVE?

Pilgrims are welcome to drive to the Retreat Center. Parking is available directly in front of the entrance. Directions can be provided when you sign up.

IS THE RETREAT CENTER ACCESSIBLE TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES?

Yes. The entire retreat center is on a single level and handicap accessible.

WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR SPECIFIC QUESTIONS OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

Tony Traficante by email at "Traf05@rocketmail.com" or text: 407-694-6169.

