

YOUR WEEK AS A PURPLESHIRT

All pilgrimage weeks in Lourdes are both similar yet different! The below timetable gives an idea of a typical week and the activities you will participate in as a Purpleshirt. Please bear in mind all these activities may take place in a different order and on different days during your week away.

Breakfast and dinner times will be taken together as a Purpleshirt group in your own hotel. Lunch will be eaten with your assigned hotel group.

Thursday-Friday – Leave the UK by coach and ferry to travel to Lourdes. A time to chat and get to know each other. Arriving in Lourdes in time for lunch. Spend some time resting and unpacking, before heading out with the leaders to explore the Sanctuary and town.

You will share some games and your intentions for the week, before a much-needed early night after the long journey.

Saturday – After early breakfast, you'll go to your helper hotel group for the first time. You will be guided by your Purpleshirt leaders to find your helper hotel group where the hotel leaders will introduce you to the team and the pilgrim you will be helping today.

You will take part in the morning activities and eat lunch together, before heading out to the opening Mass in the early afternoon. There will be time for a visit to the Grotto before you head back.

After dinner together, at the Purpleshirt hotel, the group will have some time with the leaders to share thoughts about the day and have some fun.

Sunday – You will help an Assisted Pilgrim to attend the International Mass, with thousands of other pilgrims from all over the world celebrating together. Assisted Pilgrims may wish to go to reconciliation in the afternoon, followed by some shopping or a visit to a café in town.

Our Assisted Pilgrims are grateful for your help and company, and as you get to know them, you'll find it is fun to sit and chat over a soft drink or hot chocolate!

Today you'll rejoin your helper hotel group after dinner to take part in the Torchlight Procession, before making sure your pilgrim is safely back to the hotel for their much-needed rest.

Monday – Groups go to the Baths, to experience the waters of Lourdes, washing our faces and hands in the miraculous waters of Lourdes, this is a very special prayerful moment to share with your pilgrim. In the afternoon, you celebrate Mass as a hotel group before walking together in the Blessed Sacrament procession.

There will probably be time for an ice cream and a chat before bringing your pilgrim back to the hotel. This evening you will join the other helpers and the clinicians for the opportunity of reconciliation.

Tuesday – This morning, your pilgrim may like to go to the music concert or take some time exploring the town. It is nice to chat with your pilgrim and maybe find something they have not yet done in Lourdes to experience together.

After lunch the Diocese meets for Mass with sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, this is a highlight of the week for many on the pilgrimage. Our hotel group shares this very special moment together, but our focus is on those being anointed.

We spend some time after dinner with our hotel group enjoying party night where people share their skills and acts (often silly but an evening full of laughter), before heading back to the Purpleshirt hotel for more social time together.

Wednesday – Our last full day in Lourdes. We celebrate Mass within the Grotto, such a privilege.

You may spend the afternoon assisting your pilgrim with their last-minute souvenir shopping needs or helping them to pack and prepare for the journey home tomorrow (you'll need to do this for yourself too – don't forget to pick up some snacks for the coach journey) In the late evening, you will go as a Purpleshirt group to pray at the candle bank with your leaders.

Thursday – Up early to clear your room before joining your hotel group for the closing Mass. Afterwards you say goodbye to your pilgrims who will begin their journey home. We hope you will have experienced joys sharing your pilgrimage week with them.

After lunch you board the coach to travel home with full hearts, looking forward to spreading the experience of Lourdes with your family and friends when you see them tomorrow.