

Purpleshirt Helpers

Information for Parents

Attached is a copy of the information sheet that has been given to your year 12 child who is considering applying to become a Purpleshirt Helper on the Lourdes Pilgrimage.

The purpose of that document is to set out what a Purpleshirt is, what they will be involved with on the pilgrimage and what will be expected of them. There are some points about which you may like to have additional information.

What are the dates of the Pilgrimage?

The Purpleshirts will set off by coach from Crawley, around midday on **Thursday 23 July 2026** arriving in Lourdes early on **Friday 24 July**. Their return journey will start from Lourdes around midday on **Thursday 30 July** arriving back in Crawley on **Friday 31 July**, early to mid-morning.

What is the cost of a place on the pilgrimage?

The full cost of the Purpleshirt pilgrimage is £800. We offer a subsidised price for Purpleshirts of £700 if the full cost will be a challenge. This includes all aspects of the pilgrimage experience, including travel, accommodation with full board, insurance, plus pre-pilgrimage preparation days and post-pilgrimage events in the UK. Many schools and parishes are happy to support young people financially and will also allow them the opportunity to fundraise. It is well worth knowing what the school is doing and what your parish priest may also

allow. The Catenians also offer funding to catholics aged between 16 and 25, which is worth applying for.

To spread the total cost the pilgrimage office welcomes standing orders or monthly payments and never wants to refuse a child through financial constraint. If you would like to discuss this further, please do contact the office via **E: lourdes@abdiocese.org.uk**

What is the value of this experience?

Young people explore their faith in different ways. For some this may be very evident, for others it's still a dormant seed. It is often said that everyone who visits Lourdes comes home changed. How visible that change is and how it is lived out varies from person to person, but there is no doubt that a visit to Lourdes does make a difference. It is hoped that those who travel as Purpleshirt Helpers will return as fully fledged members of Hospitalité for many years to come.

