



AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE®
UNDERSTAND, LIVE, AND SHARE YOUR FAITH

Road to Rome

Rome/Assisi Newsletter



Cavalier d'Arpino, *Madonna and Child with Saints Peter and Paul*



“Just bethink you, and shudder at the thought of what a sight Rome will see, when Paul ariseth suddenly from that deposit, together with Peter, and is lifted up to meet the Lord. What a rose will Rome send up to Christ! What two crowns will the city have about it! What golden chains will she be girded with! What fountains possess! Therefore I admire the city, not for the much gold, not for the columns, not for the other display there, but for these pillars of the Church.”

—St. John Chrysostom

Why Rome?

Before he ascended to the Father, Jesus laid out for his disciples the master plan for the proclamation of the Gospel. Preaching of the gospel message was to begin in Jerusalem, but was very quickly to spread to Samaria, and from there throughout the whole world (see Acts 1:8). Filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the Apostles wasted no time speaking about Jesus the Christ, clearly showing how he fulfilled the promises of God contained in the Scriptures and how Jesus' death on the Cross won salvation for all who put their faith in him. Persecution in Jerusalem quickly gave the Church her first martyr in the stoning of St. Stephan and this persecution scattered Jesus' disciples out from Jerusalem into Samaria and beyond. As the persecution increased, St. Peter was imprisoned, but God sent his angels to open the prison doors and allow Peter's escape. Shortly after, Peter departed Palestine and headed to Rome, the capital city of the empire that stretched to the known ends of the world. The lead persecutor, Saul, was about to become Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, and begin a series of missionary journeys throughout the heart of the Greco-Roman world. Within a single generation, we see the beginning fulfilment of words Jesus spoke just before his Ascension.

Peter and Paul would meet once again in Rome, and eventually both would suffer martyrdom, Peter by crucifixion, and Paul by beheading. Rome, the capital city of the pagan world, was to become the capital city of God. In the pagan mythology of Rome, the city's founding is connected to two mythical twins, Romulus and Remus. Peter and Paul replace these mythical Roman twins and become the foundation for the building of a new city for God's glory. The blood of the early Christian martyrs, in particular the blood of Sts. Peter and Paul, freely spilled to witness to the truth of the Gospel, is the seed of the Church. Because of this, after the Holy Land, Rome has an incredible draw for Christians. A pilgrimage to Rome to pray at the relics of Peter and Paul, and to visit the many churches dedicated to our older brothers and sisters in the faith, is a spiritual journey in which we ask God to rekindle a fire in our hearts so that we too may be his witnesses in the world.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses... to the end of the earth.”

Acts 1:8



A Holy Year Pilgrimage...

Our Rome/Assisi pilgrimage will take place during the Jubilee Year of 2025. Pope Francis states that “We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us, and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision. The forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so urgently desire.”

One of the ways Pope Francis has invited us to gain new strength and increase our hope and trust in this Holy Year is to make a brief pilgrimage to pass through one of the many Holy Doors set aside in each diocese throughout the world. Holy Doors have been a part of Jubilee Years for many centuries. For the Jubilee Year of 2000 Pope St. John Paul II wrote that to pass through the Holy Door “means to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord; it is to strengthen faith in him in order to live the new life which he has given us. It is a decision which presumes freedom to choose and also the courage to leave something behind, in the knowledge that what is gained is divine life.”

In Rome, the four papal basilicas—Basilica of St. Peter, Basilica of St. Mary Major, Basilica of St. John Lateran, Basilica of St. Paul “Outside the Walls”—will each have a Jubilee Holy Door through which we can pass to receive a plenary indulgence, for our self or for someone deceased. In preparation for this, it will be helpful to remind ourselves of the Church’s teaching on indulgences, which is a part of the Church’s teaching on the



The Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica

forgiveness of sins. Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we receive forgiveness for our sins, and all punishment is remitted. Through the Sacrament of Penance, sins committed after baptism are forgiven, and the eternal penalty that is due to sin—namely, damnation, the eternal loss of the presence of God—is taken away. However, consequences still remain that the sinner must bear. This is what is traditionally called the temporal punishment for sin. Through an indulgence, God grants that through the prayer of the Church the temporal penalty for sin due to someone be reduced (as in the case of a partial indulgence) or be eliminated (as in the case of a plenary indulgence). By God's grace, participation in a prayer or action that has an indulgence attached to it brings about the necessary reconciliation without the suffering that would normally accompany it. The granting of an indulgence by the Church is "the expression of the Church's full confidence of being heard by the Father when—in view of Christ's merits and, by his gift, those of Our Lady and the saints—she asks him to mitigate or cancel the painful aspect of punishment by fostering its medicinal aspect through other channels of grace."

In addition to passing through the Holy Door, to receive the Jubilee Holy Door indulgence the faithful should be in a state of grace and have the interior disposition of complete detachment from sin, and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (within 20 days before or after), receive the Holy Eucharist with a reflection on mercy, recite the Profession of the Faith, and offer prayers for the Holy Father and his intentions.

The Jubilee Prayer

Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, a yearning for the treasures of heaven. May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth. To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever. Amen.



PASSPORTS

Your passport is your single most important document when traveling. Be sure to make extra copies. Leave a copy at home with someone you can reach in case of an emergency. Take an extra copy with you in your suitcase. During daily travels, passports can be left in your hotel room's safe. If carrying your passport, consider purchasing a money/passport pouch that can be worn under clothes, around your neck/waist.

CURRENCY \$€

The Euro has been the official Italian currency since 2002. Euro coins and paper bills are available in denominations similar to US dollars, with the addition of €1 and €2 coins. 1 Euro equals roughly about 1.03 US dollars (1 USD = 0.97€), but rates continue to fluctuate due to changing economic issues. ATMs are available in cities and towns and are connected to European and American banking systems. Credit cards are widely accepted in Italy. Prior to departing, call your credit card company to let them know that you will be using your card overseas during the dates of our trip; this will help avoid purchase rejections by your credit card company, thinking that your card has been stolen. Also, inquire with your credit card company regarding "foreign transaction fees". Euros can easily be purchased/ordered at many banks here in the US.

WHAT TIME IS IT?

In May, during Daylight Savings Time, the time in Italy will be 6 hours later than Eastern Standard Time.

WHAT ABOUT THE WEATHER?

Rome weather in May is warm and sunny with temperatures likely be in the mid 70's. In Assisi, temperatures will likely be in the mid to high 60's. Given these temperatures and the fact that late spring, early summer, can still bring a chance of rain, a light to medium water-resistant jacket is a good idea. Plan to dress in layers so that you can adjust easily, for indoor and outdoor activities (i.e. walking outside between churches/sites and then talks/tours inside churches/sites). It is always helpful to monitor internet sites such as www.weather.com for Rome and Assisi, Italy, the week prior to our trip to obtain current forecasts.



Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls

WHAT ABOUT POWER?

Electricity in Italy, as in the rest of Europe, is 220 volts alternating at 50 Hertz (as compared to the US at 110 volts alternating at 60 Hertz). The electric outlets used are Type C European rounded two-pronged plugs (compared to flat two-pronged plugs used in the US). Given this, you will need a plug adapter (i.e. to adapt the flat two-pronged plug on any electric devices you bring from the US to fit into the wall outlets in the hotel room) and a converter (i.e. to convert the 220V down to the standard 110V used by US electrical devices). Many chargers for cell phones and camera batteries can handle up to 240V, so only a plug adapter is needed (see your charger to confirm). Kits that have both a voltage converter and several adapters for various countries are readily available online, at travel stores, or in the travel section of large retailers. Find more info about Type C outlets and plugs. at <https://electricaloutlet.org/type-c>.



Town of Assisi

BUON GIORNO! GOOD MORNING!

Italian is the official language of Italy. In areas frequented by tourists (hotels, tourist sites, etc.) many working at such locations will be able to communicate at least a little in English, but not all Italians learn English, so knowing a few Italian phrases is very helpful. Here are a few to get started with, but there are many websites, language programs and smart phone apps that can help.

Hello!—**Ciao! or Salve!**

Good Day/Morning!—**Buon giorno!**

Good Evening!—**Buona sera!**

Good Night!—**Buona notte!**

Thank you.—**Grazie.**

You're welcome.—**Prego.**

Please.—**Per favore.**

Yes.—**Si.**

No.—**No.**

Excuse me.—**Mi scusi.**

How are you?—**Come sta?**

I am good.—**Sto bene.**

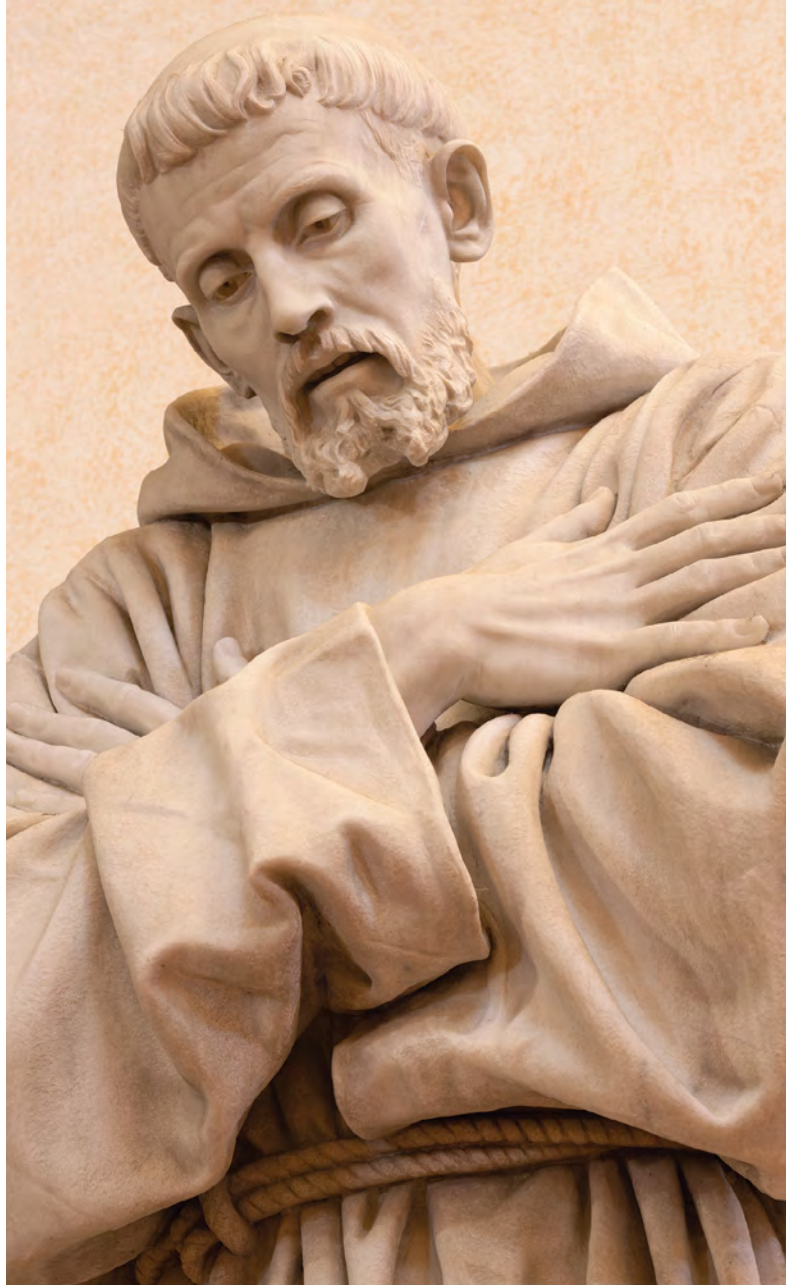
Do you speak English?—**Parla inglese?**

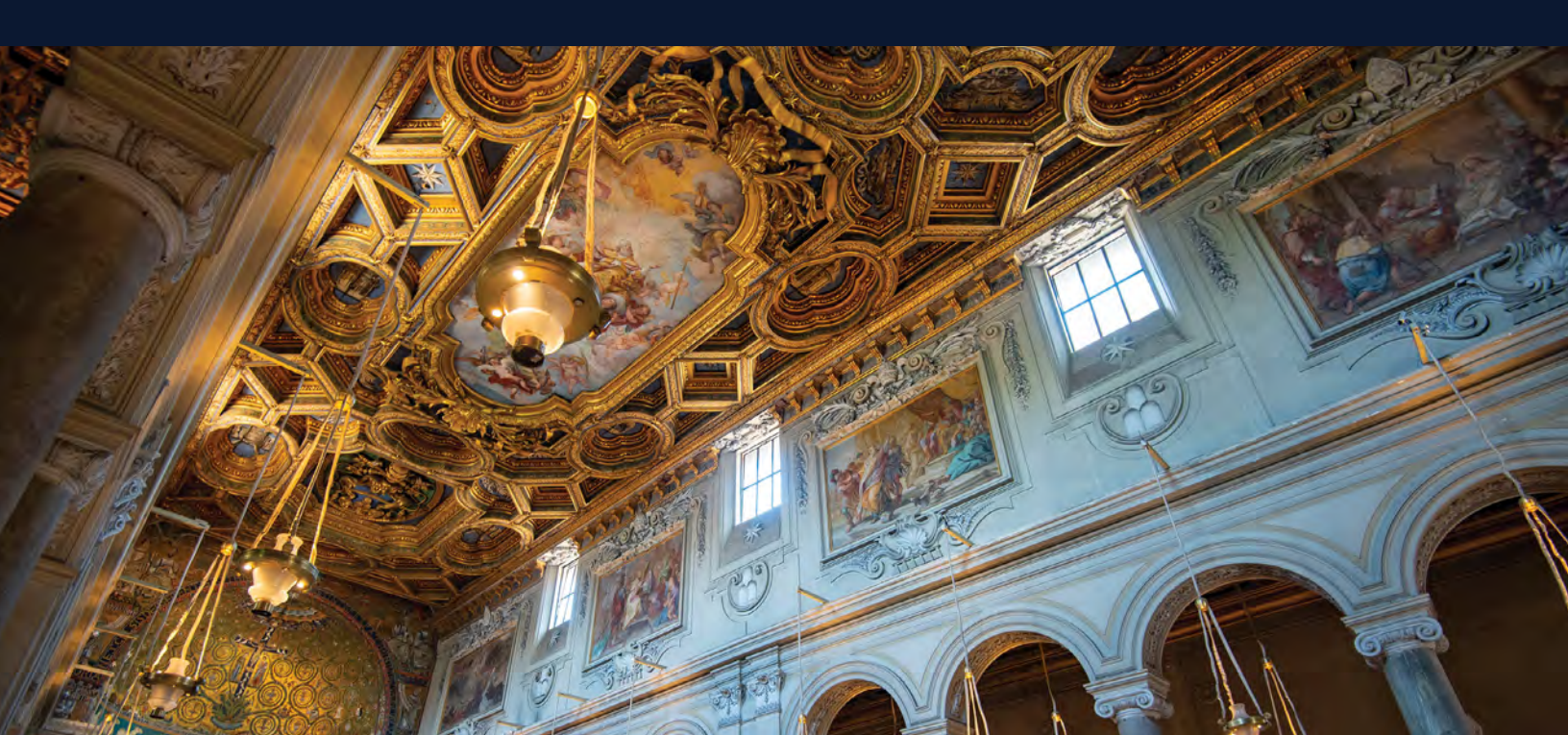
How much is it?—**Quanto costa?**

Where is the bathroom?—**Dov'è la bagno?**

“The deeds you do
may be the only
sermon some persons
will hear today.”

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI





Medieval basilica of San Clemente

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel protection is recommended to help protect your trip investment from unforeseen events such as flight delays, baggage loss or unexpected sickness or injury. For information on recommended plans or to enroll, contact Travelex Insurance Services at 800-228-9792 and reference location number 06-0346 or use the following link [here](#).

BEGGARS

As in any large city in the US, and especially given the number of pilgrims/tourists that visit Rome every year, it shouldn't be surprising to find men/women/children begging for money or pushing their items (roses, maps, souvenirs, etc.) for sale. This interaction can be awkward for some. You shouldn't feel that you "have" to hand out money, simply thank the individual for their offer and firmly say "no thank you" and continue on your way, remembering to treat others with respect even if declining their adept sales work! If you would like to offer a monetary gift, this is an instance where having a few euros handy avoids a long stop to look through a purse or wallet. Additionally, Rome is infamous for pick-pockets. Keeping wallets and purses out of sight and close will be important so as to avoid attracting those looking to take such things off your hands. A common

practice to watch out for is a someone waving an item for sale in your face in order to distract you while they pull a wallet out of a back pocket, grab or cut into a purse.

FOOD

Italy is famous for food, and we will have ample opportunity to enjoy this pride and joy of Italian culture. From cappuccino and espresso, to spaghetti bolognese and eggplant parmigiana, to nightly visits to the corner gelato shop, any trip to Italy will definitely delight the taste buds. Breakfasts will be provided at the hotel in the morning before departure for the day's activities. The included lunches and dinners will be provided at selected restaurants in Assisi and Rome. Additional drinks/alcohol are not included in the pricing but can be purchased separately. Meals not included in the tour pricing can be enjoyed at numerous restaurant options depending on the location of our day's travels.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Typically it can be very expensive to call from hotels back to the US. Check with your cell phone carrier about an international voice and/or data plans, roaming fees, etc. Free wi-fi is available at both hotels.

HEADPHONES / EAR-BUDS

Tour guides will be using a microphone transmitter when teaching inside churches. Each pilgrim will be provided a receiver and ear pieces so that you can easily hear the teaching.

CLOTHING

Please plan to limit luggage/bags to one suitcase and one additional smaller bag per person (this count does not include a purse or camera case, etc.) In packing clothes for a pilgrimage, keep two things in mind: variety/versatility, but also compact enough to fall within the airline luggage weight and size limitations on all domestic and international flights. Pack as lightly as possible—you'll be happy you did when going through the airports and checking in and out of hotels. As pilgrimages often involve quite a bit of walking, sport shoes, or other comfortable, sturdy shoes are a must. Otherwise, uncomfortable shoes and blisters will make for a long week! Sunglasses and sunscreen are good to have for any time we are out in the sun. Also, be sure to bring a portable umbrella in case of rain.

Appropriate and modest attire is necessary at churches and holy sites. Casual to business casual is a good rule of thumb for dress. For morning and afternoon visiting of various churches and sites, more casual clothes will work fine. Evening dinner will provide time to dress up a bit, if desired, and visit some wonderful Italian restaurants. The following suggested items should be adapted to your personal needs:

Men: Casual slacks/khakis, casual/sports shirts. Dress slacks, shirts (sport coat optional).

Women: Casual slacks, skirts, blouses, tops (if sleeveless, please have a sweater/jacket/etc. along as well). Dress slacks, skirts or dresses, blouses and tops

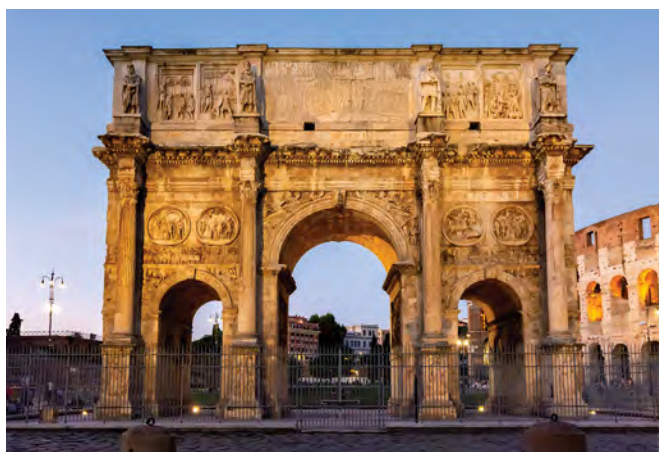
All: Walking/sport shoes. Accessories (socks, hosiery, belts, ties, scarves, etc.) Sweater. Rain resistant jacket. Travel umbrella.



The Christian Martyrs' Last Prayer by Gerome



Colosseum



After receiving a vision assuring him that he would conquer under the sign of the Cross. Constantine's army, bearing Christ's monogram on their shields, defeated Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge on October 28, 312AD. Dedicated in 315AD, the Arch of Constantine commemorates this victory.



Apse mosaic in the Church of St. Pudenziana, which is recognized as one of the oldest places of Christian worship.

AVOIDING BAGGAGE PROBLEMS

Much can be done before the trip to help avoid baggage problems during the trip. Here are some helpful recommendations:

- Tag each piece of luggage with bright luggage tags noting your name and address (we will be sending luggage tags just prior to the trip), or some bright colored markings, so that it is easy to identify your luggage at baggage claim when you arrive. Inside each bag also include a note with your name, contact information, the address of your destination, dates of your stay, and the name of the airlines and flight number on which you are traveling.
- Make a list of the contents of each bag.
- Don't over-pack! Overstuffed bags are more susceptible to burst open at the seams. If you have to force a bag shut, it's too full. Not over-packing also leaves space for adding souvenirs on the way home.
- Pack essentials and valuables (i.e. cash, eyeglasses, medicines, jewelry, business and travel papers, etc.) in carry-on luggage that you will carry with you on the plane. Also pack such things as cameras, laptops, and breakables in carry-on luggage, as these items are often not covered by airline insurance, and the airlines will likely not reimburse you if they are damaged.
- Don't forget 3-1-1 for carry-on luggage. In carry-on luggage, limit any liquid, gel, paste or aerosol container to three (3) oz. (or 100ml) or less. Put all these items into a single (1) one (1)-quart size, clear, zip-top bag. You may need to remove this bag at the security check-point and place in a plastic bin to be scanned.
- Pack a change of clothes in carry-on luggage, so that in case there is a problem with your checked luggage, you have at least one change of clothes along with you in your carry-on.
- Check with airlines to confirm size and weight restrictions on carry-on luggage, so that you are not forced to check a piece of luggage you intended to carry on with you.
- Remove old baggage tags from your luggage, so that there is less chance of confusing baggage handlers.
- Check in early at the airport. If you rush in late, you may make your flight, but your luggage may not.
- Double check the destination and flight number on your tagged luggage before it is out of sight.
- Typically on overseas flights airlines will allow you to check one bag at no fee. Additional checked bags can cost \$100 a piece. Contact the airlines to find out their baggage charges and for additional specific questions about baggage requirements and limitations.



HELPFUL CHECKLIST OF IMPORTANT ITEMS

- ☐ **Passport.** Make extra photocopies, leave one at home with a friend or family member and pack an extra in your luggage.
- ☐ **Small day pack** (back pack, shoulder bag, etc.) to take with on daily travels to hold such things as a bottle of water, Bible, journal, camera, etc. Remember, this bag should be as small as possible for ease of transport.
- ☐ **Journal. Rosary.** Just before departing for the pilgrimage, you will be sent a journal with information on various sites and space for taking notes, if desired, on any teaching at the sites.
- ☐ **Cash, credit card, ATM card.**
- ☐ **Sunglasses, sunscreen lotion, hat, travel umbrella.**
- ☐ **Camera and extra digital card(s).**
- ☐ **International plug adapter and electrical converter.**
- ☐ **Medicines or prescriptions** you must take, preferably in their original bottles. Keep any necessary medication with your carry-on luggage.
- ☐ **Some additional medicines** that you might consider bringing along include medicine for headaches, medicine for upset stomach or heartburn, medicine for diarrhea, bandaids (in case of a blister), etc.

OTHER

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