



## THE CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES INFORMATION AND APPLICATION FORM FOR THOSE WISHING TO VOLUNTEER AS HELPERS

This information sheet and Helpers' Application Form is for those who are planning to come on the Catholic Association Annual Pilgrimage to Lourdes, **22<sup>nd</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> August 2008**, and who wish to **volunteer as helpers or musicians**. This includes the Diocesan Pilgrimages of Clifton, East Anglia, Northampton, Portsmouth and Southwark Dioceses, the Stonyhurst College Pilgrimage, and the Carmelite Pilgrimage, as the volunteers are organised centrally by the Catholic Association.

Among the various groups within the Catholic Association, there are usually about 150 adults who need care or assistance. We encourage many of these people to stay in the Accueil Notre-Dame, a residential facility, where their full-time care is the responsibility of **volunteer helpers** from the pilgrimage. Here they can receive different degrees of support as required, from simple company to comprehensive medical and physical care. Some of the volunteers are qualified doctors and nurses, but the majority are not formally qualified; some are very experienced in Lourdes, but others are on their first pilgrimage. The Accueil is a lively community for all pilgrims, where young and old meet. Other assisted pilgrims, if accompanied by a relative, spouse or carer, choose to stay in a hotel, where they may receive more limited support from the volunteer helpers.

**Anyone aged 17 and over may volunteer as a helper**, subject to the information and advice given below. We are always looking for new volunteer helpers, and for **musicians/singers**. There are also **childcare arrangements** in place for the children of registered volunteer helpers – see below.

**We require all volunteers to complete the enclosed form, and to return it as appropriate**, see names and addresses overleaf. Please complete this form even if you have travelled with the Catholic Association Pilgrimage before, and return it as soon as possible – **no later than 20<sup>th</sup> June 2008** (nine weeks before the pilgrimage). It greatly helps the organisers if the forms are returned as early as possible, as a great deal of planning is required to prepare job rotas and to ensure volunteer support for the travel arrangements, and this has to be done in everyone's spare time.

Volunteer work generally falls into three categories (see also [www.catholicassociation.co.uk](http://www.catholicassociation.co.uk)):

- **Rolling duty** - helping people to move from the Accueil or hotels to the events of the pilgrimage (*e.g.* masses, processions), or to shops, cafes *etc.* Usually this involves pushing wheelchairs.
- **Accueil Care duty** - assisting the nurses with the care of the guests, *e.g.* helping them to wash and dress, making beds, and cleaning their rooms and bathrooms.
- **Other duties** – which include helping in the Accueil dining room, and the vital job of ensuring a steady supply of tea and coffee from our kitchen (not cooking, as the food is provided).
- Another key role is to spend time with our guests, chatting, socialising, shopping *etc.*

**Male volunteer helpers are called “Brancardiers”** meaning “stretcher-bearers”, and wear the official blue pilgrimage polo shirt when on duty, to help identify them as workers in our group. The **female volunteers are called “Handmaids”**, and are all provided with a uniform (blue dress).

Many helpers will work in teams comprising a mixture of Handmaids and Brancardiers and will participate in a mixture of Accueil Care and Rolling duties, under the supervision of experienced team leaders. Other helpers will be assigned to specific roles for the whole week, where continuity is required. We are also **actively looking for senior helpers** who may want slightly lighter duties, *e.g.* to work as **marshals and guides** to the rest of the pilgrimage as it processes through Lourdes.

Volunteer **musicians and singers** are also required. This may be “full-time” or fitted alongside other duties – please see details below and complete the relevant section on the form.

The variety of duties should enable people of all ages (from 17), capabilities and experience to volunteer. The information that you give us on the Application Form will allow us to place you in the most appropriate job – we encourage you to express your preference for the sort of work you would like to do, and to specify if you would prefer a limited time commitment. We hope that you do not think that any questions are too intrusive, but we do need this information to plan the duties and form suitable teams. We also have a duty of care to all pilgrims who travel with us to Lourdes.

We also welcome qualified **Doctors** and **Nurses**. If you are a qualified doctor, or a qualified UK-registered nurse, please do not fill out the enclosed form, but write directly to the Chief Doctor or Chief Nurse as appropriate (addresses below).

In June/July we will hold a series of **Preparation Days**, and we will send further details of these to volunteer helpers as forms are received. These are very useful for new helpers, to learn more about the work and the pilgrimage as a whole, and to meet more experienced volunteers, including some of the organisers. We also complete CRB application forms on these days. We hope you will come to one of the following: **Cambridge, June 21<sup>st</sup>; London, July 6<sup>th</sup>; Basingstoke, July 13<sup>th</sup>**.

We would ask you to consider your own well-being before volunteering. If you have not previously been on pilgrimage to Lourdes, you may find it a tiring week – it is better to enjoy the experience, and if you have energy to spare you can volunteer as a helper if you return in future years.

If you are assisting with the care of another pilgrim (i.e. a relative or friend) travelling with you and staying in a hotel, then you should not volunteer as a helper, as your responsibility is to that person, and thus this form is unnecessary.

**To volunteer, please complete the relevant sections of the attached form and send it to the correct person AS SOON AS POSSIBLE:**

**Chief Doctor**

Dr Trevor Fernandes  
The Paddock, Hudnall Lane  
Little Gaddesden  
Hemel Hempsted  
Herts. HP4 1QE

**Chief Nurse**

Mrs Frances Presgraves  
17, Mountbatten Avenue  
Yaxley,  
Peterborough,  
Cambs. PE7 3NY.

**For all other Volunteers:**

**Handmaids & Brancadiers**  
Mrs Sadie Vile  
45 Diamond Road  
Watford, Herts.  
WD24 5EN.

Please also note:

1. If you **only want to volunteer as a singer/musician**, and **not** as a helper, please send your completed form directly to the **Co-Director of Music**: Mrs Judy Ball, 8, Farrow Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR5 8AH.
2. If you wish to **combine a contribution to the music with being a volunteer helper**, send the form to Rupert Bell, including the completed Music section. The Heads of Service will ensure your duties allow participation in the Music Group and will pass your details to the organisers.
3. If you are bringing children (aged 0-16) with you to Lourdes, and would like them to be part of the **Helpers' Children's Programme (HCP)** (a childcare programme staffed by volunteers with appropriate qualifications) please complete the form to volunteer as a helper and also contact the HCP co-ordinator directly: Catholic Association HCP, 5 Kingslee Court, 17 Worcester Road, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 6PH. Email: [hcp@catholicassociation.co.uk](mailto:hcp@catholicassociation.co.uk) Telephone: 020 8770 0214. **Families must be registered with the Helpers' Children's Programme by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2008.**
4. If you are aged 17-25, and wish to be part of the **Young Helpers' Group**, (a supervised group staying in a separate hotel) please directly contact the Leader of this Group: Ms Tina Walker, 444 Aureole Walk, Studlands Park, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 7BD, [ca\\_youth@hotmail.com](mailto:ca_youth@hotmail.com)

**APPLICATION FORM FOR VOLUNTEER HELPERS FOR THE  
CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES, 2008**

Incorporating the Dioceses of Clifton, East Anglia, Northampton, Portsmouth, and Southwark, and the Stonyhurst and Carmelite groups.

Please return this form to the appropriate Head of Service **as soon as possible – ideally no later than 20th June. If possible, please staple a passport-sized photo to the top.** We recommend that you keep a copy of the form for yourself. The form must be completed by the actual volunteer, unless s/he is currently abroad, and not returning to the UK until after 20<sup>th</sup> June. In that case, completion by a close relative is acceptable.

Title and Name.....Male/Female.....

Address.....

.....

.....Postcode.....

This address will be used to send information to you in August, but you may be phoned earlier.

Telephone number(s).....Date of Birth.....

Email.....Nationality.....

Occupation .....

If you are in full-time education please give name of school/college/university, and details of qualifications being studied, and stage reached.....

.....

Travel Arrangements/dates/times in as much detail as possible:.....

.....

Hotel ..... Diocese/group affiliation.....

Name of person(s) with whom you are sharing your hotel room in Lourdes (if known), or with whom you wish to be on duty/same shift.....

Would you like to be involved as a musician or singer ?.....

Instrument (s).....

If you want this to be your only commitment, and do not want to be a volunteer helper, you do not need to complete the reverse of the form. Send your form to the Director of Music. If you wish to be both a musician and a volunteer helper indicate here.....

A copy of the front page of this form will be sent to the Director of Music on your behalf.

Do you have previous experience of working in Lourdes ? When, and with which group ?.....

.....

.....

**PTO/**

Do you have other experience of working with sick or disabled people ? .....

Any other relevant skills?.....

Please indicate your **preferred duties** from the description on information sheet:

Mixed (Care+Rolling)      Accueil Care      Dining-Room      Kitchen      Marshalling

Other (please specify) .....

Experienced helpers – would you consider working (part-time) in the Piscines ?.....

Experienced helpers – are you prepared to be a Team Leader/Deputy ?.....

**State of Health** (All information will be treated in the strictest confidence, and will only be used to determine appropriate duties. All pilgrims must also complete the Medical Information Form supplied, and return to the Chief Doctor).....

**Male Polo Shirt size:** (circle as applicable) Small Medium Large Extra-Large I have my own

**Female Uniform size:** 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 I have my own

circle size as applicable & state height if shorter than 5'2" (1.57m) or taller than 5'6" (1.68m)

In case of emergency in Lourdes: Next of Kin.....

Relationship.....Telephone.....

**Please give us any further information that you think may be relevant on an attached sheet.**

**New volunteers, and those who have not worked with the CA in the past three years (since 2005)**, please give the name and address of someone who knows you well, and can give a personal reference. The referee ideally should not be a relative, but may be an established CA volunteer.

Name of referee.....Telephone.....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

How long have you known the referee ? .....

In what connection (eg teacher, work colleague etc) ? .....

As a volunteer with the Catholic Association you will be responsible for the care of vulnerable adults, and possibly young people. Therefore, please give details of any criminal convictions, cautions, or pending criminal proceedings on a separate sheet. This information will be treated in strictest confidence, and may well not have any bearing on your suitability to work with the pilgrimage. Please also disclose whether you are the subject of any investigation and/or disciplinary proceedings by a professional body or employer.

**To be completed by all volunteer helpers.**

I declare that all the details given on this form are correct on the date given below. I undertake to provide my Head of Service within the Catholic Association with any further relevant information, and to notify them of any changes prior to the departure of the pilgrimage.

Signature..... Date.....