



The Catholic Association

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To all independent Travellers

This letter is designed to be read in conjunction with the Catholic Association Helpers' Information Sheet and Application Form for Volunteer Helpers with the Catholic Association Pilgrimage, which should be available to download. This paperwork is designed for those who wish to participate in the Catholic Association Pilgrimage, but without booking through Tangney Tours. If you are new to the Catholic Association Pilgrimage it is recommended that you travel with Tangney Tours. If you are aged 17-25, we recommend that you join the Young Helpers' Group – see separate form.

If you are joining the Catholic Association Pilgrimage to Lourdes in 2008 as an independent traveller, please complete the Helpers' Application form and return it to the appropriate Head of Service, as soon as possible. **You will not be able to participate as a Volunteer Helper with the Pilgrimage in 2008 unless you have registered as a Helper and paid the Levy** (see below) – this is to ensure that all helpers are covered by Insurance. We prefer the forms to be printed, completed by hand, and sent in by post – a real signature is important.

If you are volunteering as a qualified registered Doctor or Nurse, you do not have to complete the form, but contact your Head of Service directly, as there is specific paperwork.

It is really important that Helpers' Forms are returned as early as possible, especially this year as higher numbers are expected to join the pilgrimage in 2008. Late bookers may not be given their preferred job or role.

It is also important to include as much information about your travel plans, especially if you are not travelling with the main Pilgrimage. Please consider arriving in Lourdes before the Tangney flights, or staying late on the final Friday, to help with the difficult times at the beginning and end of the week, when we are short of helpers.

Some dates for your Diary:

We will be running **Preparation Days for New Helpers** as follows:

Saturday 21st June, St Mary's School, Cambridge

Sunday 6th July, central London (hopefully Mount Street Jesuit Centre, as 2007)

Sunday 13th July, St Bede's Church, Basingstoke

We always need some experienced helpers at these days, but it is helpful to know who is coming – let Sadie or Tina know if you are planning to attend, we will confirm details.

Preparation for the Experienced, central London, Saturday 5th July:

We are also planning a day for the more experienced helpers (at least third pilgrimage), particularly those involved in Mixed Teams and Accueil Care. The format of this day is not finalised, but we are hoping for some training in "Moving and Handling" and possibly some discussion of (or even coaching in) "Leadership Skills".

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Please also download a medical form, which should be completed and returned to Dr Trevor Fernandes. The Doctors would like everyone on the C.A. Pilgrimage, including the completely healthy, to complete one of these and return it to Trevor before the pilgrimage. Should you fall ill in Lourdes, the Pilgrimage doctors can only help you if you have completed one of these forms. Please remember to let your Head of Service know if your duties should be adjusted for health reasons.

For 2008, the Levy again been set at £25, and is compulsory – all members of the Pilgrimage must pay this, and **we cannot register you as a volunteer helper unless you have paid.** £5 is considered as “administrative” (including the costs of the badge and prayer book), and the remainder is a donation to the Catholic Association, split between the person’s Diocese, and the C.A. itself. Due to the compulsory nature of the Levy it has now been deemed unsuitable for Gift Aid. Please include your cheque for £25, made payable to “The Catholic Association”, with your completed Helpers’ Application Form, so that your Head of Service knows who has paid. We will then pass the cheques onto the Treasurer of the C.A, and ensure that you receive your badge and prayer book in Lourdes. You should also let us know whether you want some of the money to go to your home Diocese, if it is part of the C.A.

Please note: if you are booking in a “semi-independent way” with Tangneys, Stonyhurst etc, you will need to clarify whether you have paid your Levy in your fare, hotel bill etc. If you have already paid your Levy, please let your Head of Service know this. We will be cross-checking !

Many thanks,

Yours sincerely,

Sadie Vile and Rupert Bell