



Reflecting on Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage is traditionally a journey to a holy place — a place where saints have walked and where God has met people and blessed them.

People through the ages have journeyed with God on pilgrimage to perform a penance, ask for healing, pray for places where there is war or national disaster, and pray for family and friends.

Pilgrimage is an opportunity to travel lightly, to walk free of daily routines, to meet people, to make friends, to enjoy and celebrate God's creation. Too, in the traveling, the conversations and the silences, pilgrimage opens the space for us to reflect on the journey of our lives and on our journey homewards to God.



Prayer to Prepare for a Pilgrimage

God of the burning bush and guiding star ...
SHOW US YOUR WAY.

God of the stormy sea, the bringer of order
from chaos ...
GIVE US FAITH.

God of the small, still voice, the wind that
blows where it chooses ...
FILL US WITH LIGHT.

God of manna and living water ...
SATISFY OUR DEEPEST HUNGER.

God of the elements, of our inward and
outward journeys ...
SET OUR FEET ON YOUR PATH.

Loving God, bless us with a safe journey.
May the angels and saints travel with us.
May we live this day and every day in justice
and peace.

Amen.

[Adapted from: *This is the Day: Readings and Meditations from the Iona Community*, Neil Paynter, ed.]

Possible Exercises To Prepare For Your Pilgrimage

A pilgrimage is an opportunity to discover a new perspective on the familiar.

God is often found in the surprise, the chance encounter and the faces of the “little ones.” Pilgrimage reminds us to slow down and be ready to meet God anywhere and in everybody.

In preparation for your journey to Rome and Assisi, consider completing one of the following exercises as a way to turn the angle on your perspective of familiar things.

PROFESSIONAL EXERCISES

- » Shadow a coworker in a different department and experience what she or he sees each day
- » Get to know a coworker who is new or who you do not know
- » Ask a colleague what gives her or him life
- » Ask a senior leader what keeps her or him awake at night
- » Reflect on how God has brought you to this moment of your life
- » Ask God to show you the people from work you are to carry in your heart on this pilgrimage

PERSONAL EXERCISES

- » Read sacred scripture
- » Pray and meditate on God’s mercy and love
- » Attend church on the Sabbath
- » Pray for loved ones and those who need to know God’s love
- » Ask for God’s mercy
- » Spend time talking to a homeless person and learn her or his story
- » Volunteer at a soup kitchen
- » Visit an elderly neighbor or relative who lives alone
- » Call or write to a friend or relative with whom you have lost contact
- » Ask God to show you the family and friends you are to carry in your heart on this pilgrimage

