

## What Is a Pilgrimage Anyway?



"A pilgrimage differs from a tour in several important ways. It is a personal invitation from God, comprised of his offer and dependent upon the pilgrim's acceptance. God's call may vary but the purpose remains consistent: It is an individual summons to know God more fully. A pilgrimage is a spiritual journey to which the pilgrim joyfully responds 'yes' to God's invitation.

Although in previous centuries many trials were intrinsic to a pilgrimage, the modern pilgrim has an abundance of affordable travel options, yet the purpose remains unchanged. It is a journey to a holy, sacred place to usher the pilgrim into the presence of God.

The pilgrim must embark on this journey with joyful anticipation, being willing temporarily to separate himself or herself from the world and to offer himself or herself in humble service to another. A successful pilgrimage involves a commitment to leave behind one's problems and to focus instead on seeking to learn more about our heavenly Father, making one's heart full of desire for special graces, praises, petitions and thanksgiving, returning home transformed, renewed and restored by the abundant blessings received."

## **What is the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC)?**

The National Catholic Youth Conference is an exciting, biennial three-day experience of prayer, community, and empowerment for Catholic teenagers and their adult chaperones. The schedule includes keynote addresses, concurrent and workshop sessions addressing a wide variety of topics. There are also opportunities for liturgy, reconciliation, prayer and worship, recreation and special activities such as concerts, exhibits, and the interactive thematic park.

### **Who attends NCYC?**

NCYC is open to high school age young people and their chaperones. Most participants are Catholic. Many youth participants are leaders in their local parishes, schools and/or diocese, though many are just beginning to connect to their faith. Some attendees may have participated in previous national or international events such as the World Youth Day. Many are experiencing this type of gathering for the first time.

NFCYM requires that chaperones be 21 years or older. The diocesan group must have at least two chaperones for first one to ten youth and one additional adult for each additional one to six youth.

### **Who sponsors NCYC?**

The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) sponsors NCYC.

### **What is National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM)?**



Located in Washington, D.C., and led by an energetic and creative national staff, the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry is a membership organization working on behalf of youth and diocesan youth ministry leadership across the country and on U.S. military bases in Europe. Members include ninety-four percent of all Catholic dioceses, the National Catholic Committee on Girl Scouts and Camp Fire, and fifty youth-serving organizations.

## **Hotel/Motel Safety Tips**

Worried about protecting yourself from dangerous strangers while traveling? Concerned about protecting your valuables from theft while staying in a hotel room? Here are some safety tips to keep in mind.

### **To protect yourself:**

- Keep the door to your room locked at all times. If you are inside the room, turn the deadbolt and fasten the security chain.
- When you leave your hotel room, pull the door completely closed behind you. Make sure the latch has engaged. Take a moment before you leave to try the door and make sure it is closed and locked.
- Do not open your door to strangers. Use the security viewport to see who is outside your door. Do not trust someone claiming to be a hotel employee if you are not expecting one. If you are unsure, call the front desk to check. Leave the security chain engaged while opening the door for further protection.
- Check all windows and doors in your room every time you enter it and leave it to make sure they are closed and locked.
- When entering or leaving the hotel after dark, use the main entrance.
- If you travel often, consider buying a portable alarm system to hang on the doorknob for added protection. These movement-sensitive devices can awaken you if a door lock should happen to fail.

### **To protect your valuables:**

- Use the safe provided in the room to store keys, wallets, extra cash and credit cards, jewelry, and other small valuable items you are leaving in the room. If no safe is supplied, check with the front desk. They may have locked storage available for your use.
- Don't leave cash, travelers checks and expensive electronics and jewelry lying around the room.
- Leave larger expensive or breakable objects at home, if at all possible. If you must bring them, store them in the closet and out of the way of the cleaning crew.

By using your common sense and taking a few precautions while on the road, you can protect yourself and your loved ones from danger and hang on to your possessions.

## Things to bring to NCYC:

- Casual clothing such as jeans, t-shirts etc. (Do not bring clothing that advertises/promotes alcohol, tobacco or drug use or anything displaying messages that are offensive or contain sexual innuendo.)
- Jacket/Coat (be sure to check the weather for Indianapolis prior to leaving)
- Comfortable walking shoes, as we will be walking a lot between the Convention Center and Lucas Oil Stadium.
- Toiletries
- Camera – bring at your own risk.
- Hearing Protection – the noise levels may exceed comfortable levels during some of the concerts, etc and you may wish to be prepared for this.
- Backpack or bag for daily use (you will get all kinds of free things from vendors.)
- Refillable Water bottle
- Trading Items
- NCYC T-shirts if your parish group has one (diocesan shirts will be give to you in Indianapolis)
- Spending Money (food and souvenirs – be sure to have a combination of cash and debit cards as some vendors will not take debit cards).

### **Things not to bring to NCYC:**

- Valuables
- Computers, MP3 players, I-pods, electronic devices of any kind, etc.
- Homework (there will not be any time to work on it)

We **highly recommend** limiting your things to one backpack and one suitcase.