



ORDER OF MALTA®  
FEDERAL ASSOCIATION, U.S.A.

## 2018 Lourdes Pilgrimage

### Travel Information

Dear Lourdes Pilgrim,

We are very pleased that you will be joining us on our 2018 Lourdes Pilgrimage.

**1. Glimpse of Lourdes** - The city of Lourdes is nestled at the base of the Pyrenees Mountains in the south of France, near the Spanish border. A useful website for learning more about Lourdes is [https://www.lourdes-france.org/en\\_](https://www.lourdes-france.org/en_). This is the official website for the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes.

**2. Weather** – The weather in Lourdes is highly variable. It can be warm some days, and cold and rainy the next. It is highly likely that it will rain for at least one day during our trip. We as pilgrims participate in activities despite bad weather. You can find the weather forecast for Lourdes at <http://www.weather.com/> (search for “Lourdes, France”).

**3. Travel Tips** – Lourdes is six hours ahead of the United States (relative to the eastern time-zone).

You may want to check if the service contract for your mobile phone includes international service. Many mobile phone contracts do not. The hotels provide WiFi service in the lobby areas.

You will need a power adapter in France. Like most of continental Europe, the power plugs in France have two round contacts. Moreover, the power is 230 volts and 50 Hz (compared to 120 volts and 60 Hz in the United States). You should verify that your electrical appliance will work with this different type of power. Most laptops, tablets, and mobile phones will work, whereas many hairdryers and electric shavers will not.

**4. Travel/Health Insurance** – Some health insurance, including Medicare, does not cover medical emergencies overseas. You should check directly with your insurance provider. Although the Federal Association does carry insurance for the Lourdes Pilgrimage, you may want to consider purchasing your own traveler’s insurance from a provider such as TravelGuard (<http://www.travelguard.com/>).

**5. Packing Luggage** – Our charter aircraft out of BWI allows two bags, each under 50 pounds, and one carry-on bag. Carry-on bags must be small enough to fit into an overhead bin or beneath the seat in front of you. A typical carry-on bag is a purse, a briefcase, or a backpack.

Wheel chairs and strollers must be clearly marked with your name.

If you intend to take Lourdes water back with you, please allow for this in figuring your weight limit. A gallon of water weighs about eight pounds. Likewise, a quart weighs about two pounds. It is not possible to pay an additional amount to the charter airline for excess weight or excess baggage. You will be required to jettison items at the airport to meet the baggage requirement and the weight requirement.

If you plan to take Lourdes water back with you, it is strongly recommended that you bring “leak-proof” containers such as those sold by the Container Store. Effectively all of the souvenir containers sold in Lourdes leak, meaning that your luggage and that of others will be soggy upon arrival. You also should consider bringing some Ziploc plastic bags in which you can place your water containers, just in case they are leak-resistant as opposed to leak-proof.

**It is vital that you travel with your passport.** Also, it is a good idea to put a photocopy of your passport in your luggage in case you misplace your passport

Your medications should be carried in your purse or carry-on. Keep the medications in their drug store containers. Remember, passport and medications travel with you on the flight!

## **6. What to Bring –**

*In your pockets –*

- Passport.
- Money, ID, credit cards, wallet.

*Carry-on bag - 1 per person*

- All medications.
- Magazine, book, personal items.
- All carry-on restrictions apply – no sharp objects such as scissors, nail clippers and files, pocket knives, tweezers, or razors; no lighters; no containers of shampoo, mouthwash and other liquids over three ounces.
- You may want to purchase a small amount of Euro, the currency in France, at your local bank before departing. ATM’s are available in Lourdes for the purchase of additional Euro. All credit cards, except for American Express, are widely accepted in Lourdes. Acceptance of American Express is more limited.

*Big Suitcase* – Maximum of two per person – not more than 50 pounds apiece

- Photocopy of your passport.
- Clothing (see below).
- Cosmetics, toiletries, vitamins, etc.
- Small umbrella.
- Sun screen, sunglasses.
- Walking shoes, preferably water-proof or water-resistant.
- Bath soap (the hotels either do not provide enough or none at all), shampoo.
- Washcloth.
- Extra pair of glasses.
- Alarm clock.

Other things – If you have special dietary needs or tastes, (decaffeinated tea, artificial sweeteners, etc.) you should bring your own.

For children – you may want to bring peanut butter, crackers, and other kid snacks. There is a convenience store near the hotels which carries personal items as well as clothing.

## **7. What to Wear –**

**Malades and Companions** – Comfortable and casual throughout the week. The weather in Lourdes is varied. It can be warm and sunny one day, and rainy and cold the next. The weather can change dramatically throughout the same day. Layering is the best way to dress. Be sure to pack a warm jacket, sweater, hat, and gloves. The farewell banquet on the last night in Lourdes is a bit of a “dress-up” night, so you may wish to pack a dress / coat and tie. Dress comfortably but in a fashion that is appropriate for a religious shrine -- shorts, t-shirts, and tank tops **are not permitted** in the churches. The laundry/dry-cleaning service at the hotels is expensive and slow.

**Members of the Order** – Please see the *Guidelines for Service Uniforms* circulated previously and also posted on the Federal Association website. Casual dress is worn during the flights to and from Lourdes as well as during the Countryside tour on Monday afternoon. The farewell banquet on the last night (Tuesday) in Lourdes is a bit of a “dress-up” night, so you may wish to pack a dress / coat and tie.

## **8. At the Airport –**

Our charter aircraft will be a Boeing 787. We will fly from the Baltimore Airport (BWI) directly to the Lourdes Airport (LDE), as we have done in past years.

#### CHECK-IN AT THE BALTIMORE (BWI) AIRPORT

- On Wednesday, May 2<sup>rd</sup>, all passengers must arrive at the Baltimore Washington International Airport (BWI) around 4:00 p.m., and certainly no later than 4:30 p.m. Go to Concourse E/International Pier, the last concourse.
- **DO NOT CHECK LUGGAGE** at any curbside location. It must be brought to our gate (Signature Check-In Counter) for our flight. Passengers arriving from various domestic destinations should also bring their bags to this counter – luggage cannot be “checked through.”
- Customs requires that luggage tags contain the full name as it appears on your passport, as well as an address. Please attach the luggage tags that we give you at the airport for this purpose. All other tags must be removed.
- Please do not lock your bags – any locks will be removed.
- Inside the International terminal you will be greeted by members of the Lourdes Committee and other volunteers. They will provide you with luggage tags, and guide you through check-in and security.
- Once past security in the boarding area, look for your team leader. He/she will be looking for you too. The team leader will give you your schedule booklet, name tag, nametag ribbon, and inform you when the team will gather for a short meeting before departure.

#### FLIGHT INFORMATION FOR THE BALTIMORE (BWI) CHARTER

May 2, 2017	7:45 p.m. - Depart Baltimore Washington Airport (BWI) on Arkefly Flight OR7811. Dinner and breakfast served during the flight.
May 3, 2017	9:05 a.m. - Arrive Tarbes Airport (LDE), Lourdes, France. Claim luggage, transfer to respective hotels in Lourdes.
May 9, 2017	11:30 a.m. - Depart Lourdes on Arkefly Flight OR7812. Two meals served during the flight.
May 9, 2017	2:20 p.m. - Arrive Baltimore Washington Airport (BWI).

When booking a connecting flight home from BWI, please be sure to allow a plenty of time to clear customs.

#### **9. IN LOURDES -**

#### **ALL PILGRIMS -**

**Please note that the Federal Association must make all hotel reservations.** Hotel rooms are in short supply, and reservations made by individuals will only decrease our allotment.

Further, **all participants in the pilgrimage (including companions) must register with the Federal Association.** Our liability insurance requires this arrangement. Further, this is a matter of fairness, as the costs for the pilgrimage go well beyond flights and hotels.

#### HOTEL INFORMATION

- Our pilgrims stay at five hotels -- the Hotel St. Sauveur, the Hotel Panorama, the Grand Hotel Moderne, the Grand Hotel D'Angleterre, and the Grand Hotel de la Basilique. All five hotels are near each other and very close to the Domaine, where the Grotto is located.
- Because our group is so large, we have to split the groups' sleeping rooms and dining areas according to teams.
- **We are not able to tell people their hotel / room assignments in advance.**

Hotel Saint Sauveur  
9, rue Sainte-Marie  
65103 Lourdes, France  
Tel: 011-33-5-62-94-25-03  
<http://en.hotelsvinales.com/>

Hotel Panorama  
11, 13 rue Sainte-Marie  
65103 Lourdes, France  
Tel: 011-33-5-62-94-33-04  
<http://en.hotelsvinales.com/>

Hotel Grand Moderne  
21 Avenue Bernadette Soubirous  
65100 Lourdes, France  
Tel: 011-33-5-62-94-12-32  
<http://www.grandhotelmoderne.com/>

Grand Hotel D'Angleterre  
4, rue Saint-Joseph  
65103 Lourdes, France  
Tel: 011-33-5-62-94-00-15  
<http://www.angleterrehotel.fr/>

Grand Hotel de la Basilique  
32 Avenue Bernadette Soubirous  
65100 Lourdes, France  
Tel: 011-33-5-62-94-65-33  
<http://www.hoteldelabasilique.com/>

**10. Pilgrims Traveling on their own / LOURDES ONLY** – For those flying to Lourdes on your own, **the Federal Association will make your hotel reservations.** Consequently, please notify the office if you will be arriving BEFORE or AFTER the large group arrives. The main group arrives morning/mid-day of Thursday, May 4th. We will notify the hotel of your arrival time.

Upon your arrival, seek out your team leader. He or she will have your schedule book, name tag, and other necessary items.

The first meal of the pilgrimage is a buffet lunch at on Thursday. The first group activities are an orientation for first-time pilgrims at 2:30 p.m. and a tri-association Mass at 4:30 p.m., both on Thursday afternoon.

SCHEDULE –

- At the airport, everyone will receive a detailed schedule book that will outline every waking hour for the entire week. The schedule is light on Thursday, and then it gets busy for the next few days.
- Lourdes-Only pilgrims will receive their schedule books from their team leaders in Lourdes.
- Announcements are usually made at lunch and dinner, and any changes to the schedule will be described then. If you miss lunch or dinner, you will want to check and see if there were any schedule changes or important announcements.

**Please contact Nadia Mohammed at the Federal Association office if you have any further questions ([nmohammed@orderofmalta-federal.org](mailto:nmohammed@orderofmalta-federal.org), or (202) 331-2494).**