

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION 2020

Introduction

Welcome to the 38th Chartres Pilgrimage (2020)! Briefly, we walk from **St. Sulpice, Paris**, to Notre-Dame Cathedral, Chartres, covering 70 miles in three days. This involves long hours of walking, early morning starts, arriving at the campsite late in the evenings and requires a reasonable level of fitness. The British Pilgrimage starts on **Friday 29 May 2020 at Noon** with a rendez-vous for our **Eurostar to Paris from London**. Each day on the Pilgrimage the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be celebrated and we will also meditate on the Holy Rosary. Confession and spiritual guidance will be available throughout each day. On **Tuesday, 2 June 2020**, there is Mass in the Crypt of Chartres Cathedral before a coach takes us to Paris to catch our Eurostar back to London St. Pancras. **We arrive back in London at 16:39.**

What is the Chartres Pilgrimage ?

Chartres is at the centre of the religious history of France. Since Roman times, when the "Virgo Paritura" was venerated here, to the present day, the shrine has not ceased to attract pilgrims from the most distinguished (all the kings of France) to the most humble.

The Chartres pilgrimage is a very old tradition in France, and has been given new vigour by the association Notre-Dame de Chrétienté, which has organised it for nearly 40 years. The president of the Association is Jean de Tauriers and the Chaplain is Abbé Alexis Garnier.

The pilgrimage is a walk of prayer and penance, and has both an individual and a social character. Encouraged by Saint John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, and numerous cardinals and bishops, over 8,000 pilgrims take part, with about 750 coming from 20 foreign countries. All are united in prayer to Our Lady during a three-day walk of 70 miles, making this the largest pilgrimage of its kind in Western Europe, both in the distance covered and in the number of pilgrims. Each day, Mass is celebrated in the most beautiful way, according to the Roman Missal of Pope John XXIII. The liturgy is the traditional Latin one: magnificent instrument of prayer, stressing the universal character of the Mass.

The spirit of the Pentecost Pilgrimage

The pilgrimage is organised in a dynamic spirit, as a reaction to the materialism of our times. We place ourselves within the traditional doctrine taught by the Church. Wishing to work for the Social Reign of Our Lord, we want our Faith to overflow into our personal lives, our family lives, our working lives, and into the very life of our country. Following Huysmans, Psichari, Peguy and other illustrious converts, the Chartres pilgrims walk for Christendom, "that sunny side of a civilisation where the Kingship of Christ spreads over the lives and works of men, over the families and over the nations, searching obstinately amidst the cultures and earthly battles, for an uncompromising balance between nature and grace, wishing, by heroism and holiness, to trace already on earth the avenues of the Kingdom."

A call to conversion, a public act of reparation to the Sacred Heart, this pilgrimage is a homage to Christ the King and to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Chapters

The pilgrims walk in 'chapters'. There will be two English chapters walking the full route : the Chapter of Our Lady of Walsingham (all ages) and the Chapter of St. Alban (for young adults and teens). In addition, the Chapter of Our Lady Immaculate follows the « Family » route of about 30 miles for children (with accompanying parents or grandparents). The chapters are each led by a « Chef de Chapitre » (usually a layman) and spiritual direction will be given by numerous priests and seminarians. **It is also possible to join an English speaking Youth chapter (13-16 years) run by the Pilgrimage which covers 50 miles.**

THEME FOR THE YEAR 2020 :

"Holy Angels, Protect us in our Battles"

We meditate, for the first time, on the theme of the Holy Angels. No doubt, St. Michael, Patron of France and of the Pilgrimage, will protect us during our three days of Pilgrimage. Sts. Gabriel and Raphael will no doubt each be the patron for one of our days of Pilgrimage. Each day will also have a sub-theme. The Pilgrimage provides meditations for our use in chapter.

CONSECRATION TO OUR LADY

It is highly recommended that pilgrims consecrate (or reconsecrate) themselves totally to Our Lady after the manner of St Louis de Montfort at the campsite at Gas before the Blessed Sacrament exposed on Pentecost Sunday. The preparation for this takes 33 days and, therefore, you should start this on **27 April 2020**, (to finish on the day we leave England for the Pilgrimage). Previous pilgrims wishing to renew their Consecration should start on **8 May 2020** providentially one of the Feasts of St. Michael. Full details on our website.

Food during the pilgrimage

Notre-Dame de Chrétienté supplies bread and water at lunch throughout the walk and at the evening campsite. At the campsite, hot soup is available in the evenings and a very basic breakfast (coffee, hot chocolate and bread and jam) is available in the mornings. Pilgrims should, however, bring with them their own food, enough for three cold picnic lunches and to supplement the evening soup and morning breakfast. These should be organised in England as there are very limited opportunities to buy anything during the pilgrimage.

Assistance during the walk

Permanent medical assistance is assured by the doctors and hospitallers of the Order of Malta, who have an outdoor hospital at each campsite. At each halt, shuttle buses provide transport for pilgrims who can no longer walk or, in case of emergency, to take them to hospital.

Les Pieds (Feet!)

During the pilgrimage it is important to look after one's feet as walking with blisters is not a lot of fun. Along with the usual precautions of wearing good walking boots (well worn-in) and wool or cotton socks (**not** synthetic), experienced walkers have found that the application of "Elastoplaste", a very sticky medical tape available in French chemists (there will be one near our Paris hotel), to the sole and heel of the foot results in no blisters! It costs about £6 for a box, but is well worth the investment. A foot/hand cream is also recommended. While the services of the Order of Malta are always available en-route and at the campsites, they are no longer there to treat blisters and other minor injuries.

Pilgrim's equipment

Clothing for walking, particularly boots or good walking shoes (synthetic fibre socks are not advised). Here is the list of essentials:

a small backpack to carry throughout, containing :

- Food: lunch for the day and energy-giving snacks (dried fruit, salty nuts, etc.). Tins of tuna salad, cheese, salami, glucose tablets etc.
- **Waterproof** raingear (heavy rain possible!)
- pullover
- water bottle (water supplied) and knife/fork/spoon
- cup for tea/coffee/soup (contents supplied, bring tea bags if tea required)
- hat, to protect against the sun (and sun cream)
- Pilgrim's Booklet (supplied, containing all the Mass texts, hymns, and other prayers)
- Small plastic bag/cover for Pilgrim's Booklet
- plasters and general simple medication (for blisters, headaches, dehydration etc.)
- rosary

a larger bag, which will be taken in the special pilgrimage lorries and which is retrieved each evening, containing :

- food reserves (for remaining meals)
- torch
- warm jumper/garment (cold early mornings)
- change of clothing (a pullover, shirts, trousers, pants, vests, socks)
- light shoes for the evening (good boots recommended for the walk)
- toiletries and toilet paper (not essential)
- night-clothes
- warm sleeping bag
- **Groundsheet and mat** (for the collective tents)
- **For the Family Chapter only, it may be necessary/possible to bring your own tent.**

(When packing your luggage, make sure that that you line it with a plastic bag. Luggage is left in the open at the campsite and, if it rains, clothes may get wet. Especially, make sure that your sleeping bag is in a waterproof bag.)

Itinerary (subject to confirmation)

Friday, 29 May 2020

12:00 Rendez-vous at St. Pancras Station, London
13:31 Eurostar to Paris
16:47 Arrival in Paris and walk to hotel

Saturday, 30 May 2020 (Vigil of Pentecost)

05:00 Breakfast
05:30 Coach to St. Sulpice
07:00 Mass in St. Sulpice, Paris
08:30(est.) Leave St. Sulpice towards Chartres
13:30 Lunch at Verrières le Buisson
20:00 Arrive at Ferté-Choisel for dinner and bed ("Veillée amicale" at 21:00)

Sunday, 31 May 2020 (Pentecost Sunday)

06:15 Prayers of Departure
07:00 First Chapters leave Campsite
13:00 Solemn Mass of Pentecost & Lunch at "Courlis" meadow in Sonchamp
20:00 Arrive at Gas Campsite
21:00 Benediction, Consecration to Our Lady and All Night Exposition

Monday, 1 June 2020 (Pentecost Monday)

06:30 Load Luggage onto Lorry at Campsite at Gas
07:00 Leave Gas for Chartres
10:30 Lunch at "La petit Pleine" (St. Prest)
15:00 Solemn Mass in Chartres Cathedral
20:00 Dinner in Chartres
???? Bed!

Tuesday, 2 June 2020 (Pentecost Tuesday)

08:30ish Breakfast
10:00 Mass in Chartres Cathedral Crypt—Notre Dame de Sous Terre
12:00 Depart Chartres by coach for Paris
15:03 Eurostar leaves Paris
16:39 Arrive London St. Pancras

Family chapter will have a different Itinerary during the Pilgrimage

Important Requirements of Pilgrims to Chartres

1. Live the spirituality of the pilgrimage in your chapter
2. Welcome and support new and lone pilgrims
3. March to the end of each stage, unless unable to do so for serious reasons
4. **Adopt appropriate dress and behaviour**, in conformity with the pilgrim spirit: immodest clothing is prohibited, especially dresses which are too short, cropped tops, paramilitary paraphernalia. The use of drugs is strictly forbidden. Alcohol and tobacco use should be discrete and moderate. Young people will be particularly supervised in this regard.
5. Respect silence when it is requested. Mobile phones and electronic devices are not to be used while walking, except in an emergency.
6. Avoid wasting any food or drink, and help to maintain cleanliness; it is a basic responsibility not to drop litter of any sort
7. Help the logistics teams when asked, and respect their instructions (in particular, assisting with the dismantling of the communal tents).

The organisers reserve the right to exclude from the pilgrimage any person who does not respect these instructions or who refuses to follow them.

Visit the Website : www.chartresuk.blogspot.com

For further information, please contact:

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