

PRAYERS TO SUPPORT A PILGRIM ON A JOURNEY



INTRODUCTION

A Pilgrimage is defined as, “a journey, especially a long one, made to some sacred place as an act of religious devotion; as to pay homage.” A Pilgrimage is not a time for rest, relaxation, or pampering like a vacation; it’s rather a time of deep reflection, contemplation, faith, and prayer. Since the central point of our faith is in the Incarnation, it is important to have a physical as well as a spiritual component to this journey. Pilgrimage makes prayer an experience of the whole person – body and soul.

Pilgrimage is a time to connect deeply with God and participate in the Sacraments in the very places where salvation history transpired and where God has touched the lives of sinners and transformed them into saints. Through prayer on Pilgrimage, you will feel a closeness to our Lord that will provide fruits for years to come; that you can use to continually draw strength from in your life. Pilgrimage can give you the grace to persevere.

As St. John Paul II explained, “Pilgrimages, a sign of the condition of the disciples of Christ in this world, have always held an important place in the life of Christians. In the course of history, Christians have always walked to celebrate their faith in places that indicate a memory of the Lord or in sites representing important moments in the history of the Church. They have come to shrines honouring the Mother of God and to those that keep the example of the saints alive. Their pilgrimage was a process of conversion, a yearning for intimacy with God and a trusting plea for their material needs.

OPENING PRAYER

Dear God,

We ask your blessing as we travel today in spirit;

Guide our minds as we learn of those who came before us, traversing the pilgrim way.

Give us a hunger to seek your face in paths through fields,
along roads trod by many seeking the blessing of your presence.

Nurture our fellowship

And help us to see each other as a brother or sister

Sharing the journey to your blessed kingdom.

Amen.

(Nineveh Murray)

FIRST READING*1 Kings 19:11-13*

Then the LORD said, “Go outside and stand on the mountain before the LORD; the LORD will be passing by.” A strong and heavy wind was rending the mountains and crushing the rocks before the LORD – but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake – but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake there was fire – but the LORD was not in the fire. After the fire there was a tiny whispering sound. When he heard this, Elijah hid his face in his cloak and went and stood at the entrance of the cave. A voice said to him, “Elijah, why are you here?”

PSALM*62:2-3, 6-9*

Only in God is my soul at rest;
From him comes my salvation.
He only is my rock and my salvation,
my stronghold; I shall not be disturbed at all.

Only in God be at rest, my soul,
For from him comes my hope.
He only is my rock and my salvation,
my stronghold, I shall not be disturbed.

With God is my safety and my glory,
he is the rock of my strength; my refuge is in God.
Trust in him at all times, O my people!
Pour out your hearts before him;
God is our refuge!

GOSPEL*Mt. 17:1-11*

After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” While he

was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, “Don’t tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.” The disciples asked him, “Why then do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?”

Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things. But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

Litany of the Way: Prayer for the Journey

As we set out on the journey, we walk with Christ, who leads all pilgrims towards the Kingdom of God. Christ himself is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and our lifelong pilgrimage of faith follows his path.

As Jesus sought the quiet of the desert,
teach us to pray.

As Jesus promised paradise to the thief on the cross,
teach us to hope.

As Jesus called Peter to walk to him across the water,
teach us to believe.

As the child Jesus sat among the elders in the temple,
teach us to seek answers.

As Jesus in the garden opened his mind and heart to God’s will,
teach us to listen.

As Jesus reflected on the Law and the prophets,
teach us to learn.

As Jesus used parables to reveal the mysteries of the Kingdom,
teach us to teach.

(Litany source: USCCB)

PILGRIM'S PRAYER OF ST. JAMES PATRON OF PILGRIM TRAVELERS

St. James the Apostle is known as the patron of pilgrim travellers because, during medieval times, his sanctuary in Santiago de Compostela in north-western Spain was one of the most travelled pilgrim routes in Christendom (known through the centuries as the Camino de Compostela). Whether on a journey to a distant shrine or to a local place of veneration and importance, it is good to pray with St. James for his protection during the journey. St. James was also one of the three disciples chosen by Christ to journey with him up Mount Tabor for the Transfiguration; with this in mind, we pray with him that we, too, might have a transformative experience on pilgrimage. This medieval prayer (origin unknown) has been said many times through the centuries by travellers along the Camino pilgrimage route.

O God, who brought your servant Abraham
out of the land of the Chaldeans,
protecting him in his wandering across the desert,
we ask that you watch over us, your servants,
as we walk in the love of your name to (insert your destination here).
Be for us our companion on the walk,
Our guide at the crossroads,
Our breath in our weariness,
Our protection in danger,
Our home on the Camino,
Our shade in the heat,
Our light in the darkness,
Our consolation in our discouragements,
And our strength in our intentions.
So that with your guidance we may arrive safe and sound
at the end of the road and enriched with grace and virtue
we return safely to our homes filled with joy.
In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.
Saint James the Apostle, pray for us.
Mary, Mother of God, pray for us.
(Source: USCCB)

PRAYER UPON ARRIVAL AT THE PILGRIMAGE SITE

Lord Jesus Christ,
by your Passion and Resurrection
you obtained for me the power to strip away the old self
and to step into new life.

As I reach this holy place, I leave behind... [here mention in your own words what you want to leave behind in order to follow Jesus more closely as his disciple]
Show me your mercy and come to my aid.
I ask this in your Most Holy Name. **Amen**

PRAYER UPON RETURNING HOME

Upon returning home from pilgrimage, consider this simple prayer which can be done alone or in the company of other pilgrims, or with friends or family who welcome you.

Good and gracious Lord,
we return from the journey, strengthened by
what we have seen, where we have been,
who we have met, what we have done there.
Help us to bring the joy of our encounters
and the stirring of our hearts into our communities,
and to share your love and mercy with those around us.
Continue to guide us on our pilgrim pathways,
so that our experience upon the mountaintop
may find root in our everyday words and actions.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

ADDITIONAL PRAYERS TO ACCOMPANY THE PILGRIM

THE CANTICLE OF MARY (MAGNIFICAT)

Just as Mary joins us on our journey at the start of the pilgrimage, so too does she accompany us as we make our way home. The Magnificat, said every day in the Liturgy of the Hours for Evening Prayer, is a reflection on the day that just passed. In the same way, praying this prayer is an ideal way to reflect on the time spent on pilgrimage.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour
for He has looked with favour on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me
and holy is his Name.

He has mercy for those who fear him
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm,
and scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children forever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.

DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET

You may wish to pray this chaplet during the Hour of Mercy for God's mercy.

Step 1: After making the sign of the cross, pray one "Our Father," one "Hail Mary", and the Apostles' Creed.

Step 2: On the large bead before each decade pray the following:
Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

Step 3: On the ten small beads of each decade:
For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Step 4: After five decades, pray the concluding doxology three times:
Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

THE ANGELUS

Traditionally recited at 6:00 a.m., noon, and 6:00 p.m., the Angelus can be incorporated into your pilgrimage journey if you are traveling near those hours. This prayer can be used at other times to invoke the protection of the Blessed Mother.

V/. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary,

R/. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary...

V/. Behold the handmaid of the Lord,

R/. Be it done unto me according to your Word.

Hail Mary...

V/. And the Word was made flesh,

R/. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary...

V/. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God,

R/. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts:
that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son
was made known by the message of an Angel,
may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.
Through the same Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE ROSARY

The Rosary is a Scripture-based prayer. It begins with the Apostles' Creed, which summarizes the great mysteries of the Catholic faith. The Our Father, which introduces each mystery, is from the Gospels. The first part of the Hail Mary is the angel's words announcing Christ's birth and Elizabeth's greeting to Mary. St. Pius V officially added the second part of the Hail Mary. The Mysteries of the Rosary centre on the events of Christ's life. There are four sets of Mysteries: Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and—added by Saint John Paul II in 2002—the Luminous. The four sets of mysteries might be prayed on the following days: the Joyful Mysteries on Monday and Saturday, the Sorrowful Mysteries on Tuesday and Friday, the Glorious Mysteries on Wednesday and Sunday, and the Luminous Mysteries on Thursday.

The Joyful Mysteries

1. The Annunciation
Mary learns that she has been chosen to be the mother of Jesus.
2. The Visitation
Mary visits Elizabeth, who tells her that she will always be remembered.
3. The Nativity
Jesus is born in a stable in Bethlehem.
4. The Presentation
Mary and Joseph take the infant Jesus to the Temple to present him to God.
5. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple
Jesus is found in the Temple discussing his faith with the teachers.

The Sorrowful Mysteries

1. The Agony in the Garden
Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night before he dies.
2. The Scourging at the Pillar
Jesus is lashed with whips.
3. The Crowning With Thorns

- Jesus is mocked and crowned with thorns.
4. The Carrying of the Cross
Jesus carries the cross that will be used to crucify him.
 5. The Crucifixion
Jesus is nailed to the cross and dies.

The Mysteries of Light

1. The Baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan
God proclaims that Jesus is his beloved Son.
2. The Wedding Feast at Cana
At Mary's request, Jesus performs his first miracle.
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God
Jesus calls all to conversion and service to the Kingdom.
4. The Transfiguration of Jesus
Jesus is revealed in glory to Peter, James, and John.
5. The Institution of the Eucharist
Jesus offers his Body and Blood at the Last Supper.

The Glorious Mysteries

1. The Resurrection
God the Father raises Jesus from the dead.
2. The Ascension
Jesus returns to his Father in heaven.
3. The Coming of the Holy Spirit
The Holy Spirit comes to bring new life to the disciples.
4. The Assumption of Mary
At the end of her life on earth, Mary is taken body and soul into heaven.
5. The Coronation of Mary
Mary is crowned as Queen of Heaven and Earth.

Praying the Rosary

1. Make the Sign of the Cross.
2. Holding the Crucifix, say the Apostles' Creed.
3. On the first bead, say an Our Father.
4. Say one Hail Mary on each of the next three beads.

5. Say the Glory Be
6. For each of the five decades, announce the Mystery (perhaps followed by a brief reading from Scripture) then say the Our Father.
7. While fingering each of the ten beads of the decade, next say ten Hail Marys while meditating on the Mystery. Then say a Glory Be.
8. (After finishing each decade, some say the following prayer requested by the Blessed Virgin Mary at Fatima: O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell; lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who have most need of your mercy.)
9. After saying the five decades, say the Hail, Holy Queen, followed by this dialogue and prayer:

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray: O God, whose Only Begotten Son, by his life, Death, and Resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life, grant, we beseech thee, that while meditating on these mysteries of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

