

**Information for the International Pilgrimage of the Pilgrims of St Francis**  
**France, July 28 - August 5, 2022**  
**(departure after breakfast on August 6, 2022)**

We, the Pilgrims of St. Francis, are an ecumenical Christian movement with branches in several European countries. In addition to national pilgrimages, we have been organising international pilgrimages for over 90 years. This year it will take place in the area of N.E Brittany. In the spirit of Francis of Assisi, we shall spend nine days walking through the countryside, preparing our meals together, staying in simple lodgings and sharing our faith. On the way we will talk about our responsibilities in society and for the environment, peace and justice and other issues that concern us. Singing, playing, laughing and adventure - that too should not be missed. We try to develop more understanding of each other and practice tolerance so that we may continue this in our daily lives.

### **The week's structure**

On the first day of the pilgrimage, all participants come together to take part in an act of worship to mark being 'sent out'. Then the groups will be announced and they will leave for their first night's accommodation. For nine days the different groups are 'en route'. On the last day, everyone comes back together at lunchtime, joins in an act of worship (usually a Eucharist), eats together and enjoys the final evening. The next morning there is breakfast. Everyone is asked to leave by 10:00. It will be possible to arrive one night before the start (27th / 28th July 2022). This will cost a little extra for adults (see prices); for the young there is no charge. The night before everyone must cater for themselves. Shops and restaurants are nearby. The first meal organised by the Companions is the evening meal on the 28th of July.

### **In the groups**

The important components of the day in the groups are:-

### **The walking**

It is not the length of the walk that is important but that everyone is included, whatever their ability, in order to enjoy the countryside, to discover new places, to be exposed to the weather, and to arrive at the next destination together. The distances planned vary according to the different kinds of group.

### **Community living**

Each group has to cater for itself. Taking turns, 2 or 3 pilgrims shop and cook for the group. Where there is no kitchen, kitchen equipment with gas cookers is provided. All other household activities must be shared out (according to ability) by the whole group including the children.

### **Times for discussions**

We aim to find a time each day to talk about the theme of the year. For this purpose, texts and suggestions for activities have been prepared in advance. The theme for this year is "Water".

### **Sharing faith**

The spiritual finds its place in a morning or evening prayer, in times of meditation or in the sharing and contributions of the group. Usually, in the course of the pilgrimage, once or twice there may be an opportunity to share in a service with a local church or celebrate a eucharist within the group.

### **Singing and having fun**

Fun and creativity are also part of the pilgrimage. Often people sing or play - depending on their mood. You are welcome to bring musical instruments or games with you if they fit in your luggage.

### **Sleeping**

With the exception of the Senior Centre, everyone usually sleep on the floor. The venues where we spend the night are mostly community rooms, sports halls, churches or schools, - rooms that do not, often, meet the comfort and hygiene requirements that we are used to in our normal life. Often there are no showers, no adequately equipped kitchen and only a few toilets. In the Centre there are beds for everyone, usually in shared rooms, together with toilets and bathrooms nearby, and a fully equipped kitchen.

### **Group composition**

The groups usually consist of between 15 and 22 people. Participants come from different European countries and from different social classes. They belong to different denominations or are simply exploring their spirituality. There is a wide age range - from the toddler to the senior. This diversity will be found in all the groups as far as is feasible.

## **We especially draw your attention to the following points:**

### **The different groups**

Different groups are offered, the options chosen must be ticked on the booking form. Anyone who cannot carry their luggage from one place to another must choose a star group or centre group.

### **The 'Walking' groups**

These are for people who can walk between 10 and 18 km per day at a speed of 3 kmh approximately. Groups change their venue every day. Anyone who cannot carry all their luggage must indicate this on the registration form. Then sleeping mats and sleeping bags can be put in the car - nothing more! It is recommended that baggage is carried in a backpack weighing a maximum 8 kg, excluding the sleeping bag and mat. The walking groups have an accompanying car for cooking equipment, shopping and possibly some mattresses and sleeping bags.

### **The 'Adventure' group**

This is for people able to walk from 15 to 22 km at an average speed of 4 kmh. The group have to carry all their luggage themselves. Sometimes the group might sleep in a tent. There may be a cart (or sometimes a vehicle) to transport kitchen equipment, food, and tents. It is recommended that baggage is carried in a backpack weighing a maximum 8 kg including the sleeping bag and mat.

### **The (Senior) Centre:**

Those registering for the Senior Centre must indicate in the '**personal remarks**' section of the registration form whether they can sleep on the top bunk, and/or if they can sleep on a mattress placed on the floor.

### **The Family Group:**

If 4-5 families with small children register, we will create a separate family group. The group may move to a second venue. The group goes walking or do other activities according as it is able during the day. There will be no beds.