

Salford Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2026

"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you" (Luke 1:28).



Dear School and College leaders and chaplains,

I hope this letter finds you well?

As committed advocates for the personal and spiritual growth of young people, I am pleased to share with you information about an exciting opportunity for your college students to join the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes next year which will take place in July 2026 (30th July – 5th August 2026).

The Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes is an annual event that brings together young people from various colleges and schools with people from across Salford Diocese to embark on a journey of faith and service. This pilgrimage offers a unique chance for students to deepen their spirituality, develop a sense of community, and engage in acts of charity and compassion.

The 2026 Lourdes pilgrimage will take place from Thursday 30th July until Wednesday 5th August (subject to choice of travel routes) and will involve a range of activities designed to foster spiritual growth and personal enrichment. Young people will have the opportunity to visit the sacred sites associated with the Apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary to St Bernadette, take part in religious celebrations and engage in acts of service through volunteer work to support other pilgrims who have mobility or care needs. Most especially they will have the opportunity to connect with other young people to share in collective journey of faith. The pilgrimage has consistently proven to be a life-changing experience for many young people, equipping them with a joy-filled experience of our Catholic faith, invaluable life lessons and memories that stay with them for years to come.

If you have students who are in Year 11 and above, they will have the opportunity to volunteer. Students under 16 (Years 8, 9 and 10), would be very welcome to attend Lourdes and can go as Aspiring Volunteers. These will follow the diocesan programme as well as their own programme.

To provide further information to potential leaders of school and college groups and answer any questions you may have, we have organised an online meeting on **Thursday 20th November at 4.30pm**. During this online session, our team will delve into the itinerary, logistical details, safety measures, and the overall significance of the Lourdes pilgrimage. We will explore how participation can support students seeking to complete their GOLD Duke of Edinburgh award (Residential) and the GOLD Faith in Action award and how experience of pilgrimage can support the Catholic life and ethos of your school and collect. We will also address any queries you might have and offer insights from past leaders.

I would like to encourage you to consider participating next year and invite you to share this invitation with any colleagues who may be willing and interested in leading a group from your school or college. Attending the online meeting will allow them to gain a comprehensive understanding of the pilgrimage, its benefits, and the steps involved in becoming a part of this spiritual journey.

Pilgrimage Director: Fr. Gerard Fieldhouse-Byrne

Pilgrimage Office: Lourdes Pilgrimage Office, Cathedral Centre, 3 Ford Street, Salford M3 6DP

Tel: 0161 817 2209

Email: lourdes.pilgrimage@dioceseofsalford.org.uk Website: www.salfordlourdes.co.uk

Salford Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees Registered Charity 250037

To register an interest for the information zoom meeting, please email the pilgrimage office:
Lourdes.pilgrimage@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

Should you require any additional information or have specific questions, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Lisa Knight at the Pilgrimage Office on 0161 817 2209/
Lisa.Knight@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

Alternatively, if you have students who are **in year 11** and who may wish to volunteer, you can contact Kevin McMahon directly who is the Lourdes Pilgrimage Volunteer Youth Co Ordinator
kevin.mcmahon@vol.dioceseofsalford.org.uk.

If you have students who are **under 16** (Years 8, 9 and 10) and may wish to go to Lourdes as an Aspiring Volunteer, please contact Lorraine Leonard (Diocesan Youth Ministry Manager) at:
youth@dioceseofsalford.org.uk.

Thank you for your attention and support in spreading the word about this meaningful pilgrimage. Together, we can inspire and empower the young people of our diocese to explore their faith and participate in acts of service.

Yours,

Fr Gerard Fieldhouse Byrne
Pilgrimage Director
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