

PILGRIMAGE TO CZESTOCHOWA 2024

Milan, May 13, 2024

Dear Friends,

Here are some important technical details for the pilgrimage to Poland. Please read them carefully.

1. Personal Documents and Expenses

- A valid travel identity document and the health card are essential. It is advisable to make photocopies of these documents and keep them in a separate place from the originals.
- Participants from non-European countries must have a valid travel identity document and keep a photocopy in a separate place from the original. Additionally, ensure that a visa is not required for entry into Poland.
- Please ensure your ID is valid through at least August 20, 2024. The document you bring must match the one you registered on the website. If your document number has changed, notify the pilgrimage secretariat immediately.
- Keep in mind that Poland does **not** use the Euro; the Polish currency is the Zloty (1 euro = 4.32 zloti). You can exchange banknotes directly in Poland at authorized currency exchange points in Krakow and Czestochowa. It's advisable not to exchange currency at unauthorized locations. If you use a card, the bank will handle the currency conversion automatically.

2. Contacts

- The secretariat of the pilgrimage is available at the e-mail address: polonia24@comunioneliberazione.org

3. Medication

- Each person must have a kit including the following medications:
 - Anti-inflammatories and pain relievers (e.g., ketoprofen, ibuprofen, or acetaminophen such as Advil, Tylenol, etc.)
 - Ointment, cream or gel (Voltaren)
 - Cortisone and antibiotic ointment (Menaderm, Betnesol, Polysporin)
 - Dressing materials: compeeds (large and small), disinfectant wipes, various sized band-aids, one elastic and/or self-adhering bandage (8 cm or 3 in. wide)
 - Dry ice (1 pack each, alternatively spray)
 - Mineral salts (Electrolyte Powder Packets type Polase)

- Antidiarrheal medication (such as Imodium)
- Laxative medications for occasional constipation
- **It is also essential** to have with you:
 - Mosquito and insect repellent cream
 - High protection sunscreen
 - Moisturizing cream

Note: Individuals allergic to any of the above medications should consult their doctor for advice on suitable alternatives.

- It is essential that anyone suffering from a condition requiring specific treatment brings the appropriate medication with them.
- It is essential that **people suffering from allergies** bring their **own antihistamine medication** (we will be walking through woods and fields).
- Before embarking on the pilgrimage, it's recommended to receive a tetanus vaccination booster if the last one was administered over 10 years ago. You can get this done at your local health center or through your general practitioner.

4. Food

- For the one-day outward journey, meals (dinner + breakfast) are packed. We recommend that you take at least 2 litres of water with you as the trip will last around 24 hours.
- During our stay in Krakow and Czestochowa, participants will have the opportunity to dine independently at restaurants and bars for four breakfasts, four lunches, and four dinners. Please note that these meals are not included in the participation fee.
- During the walking days (from August 6th to 11th), everyone will need to be self-sufficient for meals and provisions, totalling 6 breakfasts, 6 lunches, and 5 dinners. For dinners, we recommend bringing a camp stove for preparing hot meals like pasta or soup. However, stoves and pots cannot be used for breakfasts, lunches, or intermediate stops along the way. Therefore, you'll need to organize yourself with ready-made products such as tuna, canned meat and salads, pâté in tubes, condensed milk, biscuits, energy bars, dried and canned fruit, etc. It's important that these foods are non-perishable and have a longer shelf life.
 - During these days, the pilgrimage organization will provide fresh bread and mineral water daily.
 - At breakfast and lunch stops, kiosks selling snacks, fresh fruit, and various soft drinks are accessible; therefore, **it is recommended not to overstock up on food.**

5. Clothing

As you'll be walking in various weather conditions, including on roads, dirt paths, forest trails, or through meadows, it's essential to come prepared with:

- Comfortable, durable shoes that are already broken in and adapted to your foot shape (preferably bring two pairs).
- A hat or bandana to shield yourself from sunstroke.
- A waterproof cape, which can also double as protection for your backpack and legs
- A warm sweater (evenings can see temperatures drop to 10-15 degrees).
- Long, lightweight trousers, recommended for walking offering protection against tar-induced erythema and insect bites.

6. Accommodation & Equipment

During the walking days we will camp for 5 nights. It will therefore be necessary to be equipped for camping life: we recommend dividing into small groups to share the provisions and equipment. Here are some essential elements for sleeping and eating:

- Tent (for 2-3 people) in very good condition, rainproof (bring spare pegs and hammer)
- Sleeping bag with insulating mat and rubber mat
- Large backpack, where you can store food supplies and changing clothes
- Smaller backpack to carry your daily essentials
- Flashlight
- Metal or plastic cup and multi-purpose cutlery
- A pot and a saucepan for every 3 or 4 people
- Gas stove

For personal hygiene, it is necessary to have:

- Water tank (5 litres)
- Swimsuit and slippers for outdoor showers and necessary material for the shower (shampoo bottles, shower gel and towels)
- Napkins and wipes
- Toilet paper

7. Notes & Recommendations

- During the outward and return journey, you will not be able to have a large backpack (stored in the luggage car) so **we recommend that you bring documents, water, food and everything you need in the small backpack.**
- **On several occasions throughout the pilgrimage, it will be necessary to carry all the luggage for medium distances.** For this reason, the **maximum weight** that can reach a single backpack is **25 kg**, but we recommend that you only carry **the essentials**. Below is a list of materials **NOT** to bring that are impractical, heavy or useless every year:
 - Water tanks with a volume of more than 5 litres
 - Propane gas cylinders over 450g
 - Suitcases or trolley

- Folding chairs
- Hairdryer
- Foods contained in glass
- Excessive food supplies
- Camping cots
- Umbrellas
- Excessive changes of clothes and shoes
- During the walk, the large backpack will be carried by vehicles, so everything you need during the day will have to be stored in the small backpack.
- In the large backpack we suggest to store clothes, food, sleeping bag stored separately in plastic bags, to prevent them from getting wet in case of rain.
- It is absolutely forbidden to turn on the stove indoors (both in your tent and in gyms, schools, etc.).
- When packing your luggage, calculate the amount of food you will need without exaggerating.
- It is recommended not to affix pointed and/or sharp objects to the outside of the baggage.
- We remind you that during the days of the walk (from the start to the arrival at the Shrine of Czestochowa) you cannot smoke, consume alcohol or use your mobile phone, according to the tradition of pilgrimages in Poland.
- Remember to bring the Book of Hours.
- Please note that during the walking days it will NOT be possible to recharge the cell phone battery.

We remain available for any problem or need for further clarification.

The Secretariat of the Pilgrimage