



ORDER OF MALTA®
WESTERN ASSOCIATION U.S.A.

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE 2007

March 23, 2007

Dear Pilgrimage brothers and sisters:

It is my great pleasure to welcome each of you into our 2007 Lourdes Pilgrimage Family. On March 2, 1858, in the 13th Apparition, Our Lady instructed Bernadette to, "Go and tell the priests to build a chapel, I want people to come in procession." Today, over 7 million pilgrims accept Our Lady's invitation and travel to Lourdes, annually. We will depart on our Pilgrimage in a short time, and it is important for us to begin to prepare ourselves both physically and spiritually, to travel to this sacred shrine.

First and most importantly, I ask that all of us open our hearts in prayer to Our Lady, asking her to guide us on our spiritual journey. The role of the knights and dames in Lourdes is to serve as messengers and instruments of Our Lady's love; the role of our honored guests, the Malades, supports the vocation of service that God gives us as knights and dames. By accepting our role of active service to the poor and sick, we give glory to God.

In this the 31st Annual Western Association Order of Malta Lourdes Pilgrimage, most of our group will travel on a Boeing 767 chartered jet. A smaller group will travel independent of the charter, and will arrive early to handle advance planning details. Our Pilgrimage Family will consist of 315 participants, including 50 Malades and 40 Companions.

For those of you traveling on the chartered flight, specific departure details will be provided to you as soon as Fugazi Travel is able to confirm the schedule. For preliminary planning purposes, you should anticipate the following schedule:

May 1, 2007

Leave San Francisco at 5:50PM

Arrive Los Angeles at 6:45PM

Leave Los Angeles at 8:05PM

May 2, 2007

Arrive Lourdes at 5:30PM

Please remember that this is the tentative schedule; the exact departure times will be provided to you as soon as they have been confirmed by the travel authorities. Everyone is encouraged to arrive at the departure airport 2-1/2 hours before the scheduled departure time.

Details concerning the check-in procedure at the airport will also be provided to you as soon as those locations are confirmed to us by the airports. It is anticipated that a full check-in aisle will be reserved exclusively for our group at each airport. Order of Malta flags will be prominently displayed to make it easy for everyone to locate the correct check-in aisle. We will also have a large number of our members available to assist anyone requiring help. Please ask for help when it is needed; remember that it is the vocation of knights and dames of Malta to serve those who need help.

We are handling the seat assignments for the flight, and are using due care to take into consideration the special needs of all pilgrims, but especially of our Malades. Seating will also be organized according to Teams (to the extent possible). Each of you will be given a specific, assigned seat, but if you need or want to switch with someone, you are welcome to do so.

Please carefully read the 2nd attachment to this email which is a letter to all Pilgrims from Richard Van Meter, MD, Chief Medical Director of the Pilgrimage. Dr. Van Meter's letter provides important medical advice that is of critical importance. Please also read the 3rd attachment to this email which provides helpful advice about "What to Wear" in Lourdes.

Should you have questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at Whtland68@aol.com; my assistant, Jesse Ortiz at jc_ortiz22@yahoo.com; or either of your Team Co-Captains.

I look forward to a spiritually enriching Pilgrimage with you.

In His love,

Kevin White, KM
Pilgrimage Director



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TO: Knights, Dames & Volunteers of the Order of Malta

FROM: Richard Van Meter, MD, KOb ~ Medical Director

RE: Medications and helpful hints for the pilgrimage

As we prepare for our upcoming pilgrimage to Lourdes, I would like to take this opportunity to address the issues of personal medications and other helpful hints before we embark.

This year will mark the Western Association's largest group ever going to Lourdes ~ there will be 315 of us going. In the past, the medical team has tried its best to accommodate the medical care for not only the Malades, but also knights, dames, volunteers and even the companions whenever possible. Of course, that policy will continue with regards to any serious form of illness. However, because of the larger number of Western Association pilgrims and the smaller number of doctors and nurses, the Malades become our priorities and I would ask the following of the remaining travelers:

- 1). Please make sure that you bring with you all of your current prescriptions and any preventive antibiotic, anti-inflammatory, or prescription anti-histamine that you may anticipate needing, insuring that you have enough quantity for the entire pilgrimage.
- 2). We advise that you carry essential medications in your carry-on luggage and not pack them in your checked baggage (just in case you become separated from your luggage).
- 3). Please discuss with your personal physician any precaution you should take to prevent DVT's (Deep Vein Thromboses – blood clots in legs).
- 4). Always bring with you simple "over-the-counter" products such as band aids, Tylenol, anti-acids, Imodium(for mild diarrhea) and a gentle laxative for constipation. As many of you know, pharmacies are available in Lourdes, but it is always easier, quicker and more convenient if you bring these "essentials".
- 5). Read and follow all travel and pilgrimage materials that you receive.

I thank all of you for your consideration to these matters and may God bless us all as we travel to Lourdes with Our Lord's the sick.



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WHAT SHOULD I WEAR IN LOURDES?

- First keep in mind that the weather in Lourdes is unpredictable; it can go from 45 F (7.2 C) in the morning with heavy downpours, to 80 F (26.6 C) in the afternoon. Be prepared for BOTH extremes by dressing in layers of clothing.
- Water-proof shoes or boots, a long raincoat and umbrella are essentials much of the time.

MEN:

As members of a military order, we are obliged to dress in full and proper uniform. **ALL** Knights, Provisional Knights, members of the Auxiliary and volunteers are expected to wear the Order of Malta work uniform throughout the Pilgrimage. The uniform requirements are as follows:

- Black uniform trousers
- White dress shirt
- Black neck tie
- Black over-shirt with Malta arm patch, bar, name badge and ribbon
- Black belt
- Black socks and Black shoes
- Black beret with patch of the Order

- Knights must bring and wear church robes and large decoration for Sunday Mass and the Procession.

Male Malades and Companions:

- Please dress for your personal comfort.
- Wear comfortable, water-proof shoes or boots;
- Layer your clothing for warmth, including long underwear and sweaters;
- Water-proof jacket and/or rain coat; gloves and umbrella.
- Also, pack sunscreen and lip cream, and a few light-weight items of clothing, because it can also be warm and sunny.

WOMEN:

As members of a military order, we are obliged to dress in full and proper uniform. **ALL** Dames, Provisional Dames, members of the Auxiliary and volunteers are expected to wear the Order of Malta work uniform throughout the Pilgrimage. The uniform requirements are as follows:

- White dress or white skirt and blouse
- Red cardigan sweater
- White veil with Malta pin
- Black shoes and tan stockings

- Dames' Miniature decoration must be worn on sweater
- Dames' Order of Malta cape must be worn
- Dames' large decoration is worn for the Procession

Female Malades and Companions:

Please dress for your personal comfort:

- Wear comfortable, water-proof shoes or boots; layer clothing for warmth; warm undergarments and sweaters; water-proof jacket or raincoat; gloves and umbrella. But, also pack a few lighter-weight items of clothing because it can be warm and sunny at times.